

Jim Craig Bio

JIM CRAIG Olympic Gold Medalist Goalie, 1980 USA "Miracle on Ice" Hockey Team

Jim Craig has been called the backbone of a team that accomplished one of the most extraordinary and memorable sports victories of all time. He went on to play professionally and transitioned to tremendous success in the business world which he still enjoys today.

Jim is in demand from coast to coast and internationally as a motivational speaker, teamwork and life coach, spokesperson, and marketing and sales strategist. Speaker bureaus and event management groups consistently evaluate and rank Jim is among the most effective speakers and corporate coaches in America.

Jim is president and founder of Gold Medal Strategies, a promotions and marketing firm that also manages and represents Jim and his appearance business.

For more than 30 years, Jim has inspired, instructed, and provided strategic and winning direction for employees and associates from more than 500 organizations, including AbbVie, AFLAC, Bank of America, Bayer Corporation, Caterpillar, Conagra, Dell, Buena Vista Home Entertainment, Coca-Cola, Dunkin' Donuts, GE Access, John Hancock, Kellogg's, Merrill Lynch, Microsoft, Morgan Stanley Smith Barney, Ocean Spray, Procter & Gamble, Pfizer, Santander Bank, Walt Disney, Welch's – and other companies that hold some of the world's most recognized and respected brands.

Jim is the co-author of the highly acclaimed business book, *Gold Medal Strategies: Business Lessons From America's Miracle Team* (2010, John Wiley & Sons); he wrote the forward for *The Boys of Winter: The Untold Story of a Coach, a Dream, and the 1980 U.S. Olympic Hockey Team* (2005, Crown Publishers), the New York Times bestseller written by Wayne Coffey.

Jim also has had acting roles in prime-time network TV sitcoms and in product TV commercials.

An All-American goalie at Boston University and standout for the Terriers' 1978 NCAA championship squad, Jim was selected as the starting goaltender for the U.S. 1980 Olympic hockey team. At the Lake Placid games his performance was phenomenal. Indispensable to Team U.S.A.'s epic – what some have called miraculous – upset of the Soviet Union was the play of Jim Craig. In the game against the Soviets, the Americans were outshot 42-16, but Jim made 39 saves, many of the spectacular variety, and his teammates scored four goals to secure the victory. Two days later, against Finland, Jim was again superb, and Team USA won, 4-2, to take

home Olympic gold.

How incredible was the victory over the Soviets? It has been called the most memorable sports moment of the 20th century. “It may just be the single most indelible moment in all of U.S. sports history,” said Sports Illustrated of Team USA’s win over the Soviet Union. “One that sent an entire nation into frenzy.”

Following the Olympic Games, Jim Craig was the starting goalie for the Atlanta Flames, Boston Bruins, and Minnesota North Stars of the NHL. While in net for the North Stars, Jim sustained a career ending injury. He is enshrined in the Boston University Athletic Hall of Fame, the International Ice Hockey Federation Hall of Fame, the United State Hockey Hall of Fame, and the United States Olympic Hall of Fame.

When Jim retired from pro hockey, he pursued a marketing and sales career with the same passion, focus, work ethic, and dedication that he put forth on the ice. He signed on as marketing and sales consultant for Valassis Inserts, owned by Australian media magnate Kerry Packer’s Consolidated Press Holdings and the largest freestanding newspaper insert company in the U.S. While with Valassis, Jim took an operating unit that had \$300,000 in annual sales and over a 10 year period built it to unit that generated \$50 million in annual sales, the top sales-producing division of the corporation. During these years, Jim received “Salesman of the Year” awards from the Marketing Corporation of America and Valassis Communications.

Jim left Valassis in 2005 and became the top salesman of Hat Trick Group, a company that creates and produces promotions, incentive marketing, and custom premium programs and products. Under his stewardship and guidance, Hat Trick Group developed new products and services and increased annual dollar sales by 80 percent and its number of clients by 30 percent in just two short years.

In 2007, Jim directed his competitive zeal and devotion to innovation and teamwork to launch Gold Medal Strategies. With Jim at the helm, in the seven years that GMS has been in business, it has grown rapidly and steadily as it serves organizations across many different business sectors – with all its clients receiving personalized attention, premium value, and competitive advantage.

A primary focus of Jim's – across all varieties of his appearances and the services he delivers – is teaching and describing how individuals and organizations can enlist and employ the winning tactics and strategies of the 1980 U.S. Olympic hockey team to improve outcome and performance of their own organizations.

Jim actively volunteers and contributes to many philanthropic organizations and causes, including taking to the ice with the Boston Bruins Alumni to play in benefit games.

Jim and his wife, Sharlene (Charlie), have been married for 29 years. They have two children; J.D., an Account Manager for Byram Healthcare; and Taylor, a Sales Coordinator at Digital Trends.