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**Authors:** Steve Strauss  
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## **Roseannes aren't welcome in the office, either**

### **ABC took bold step by canceling No. 1 sitcom**

Section: Money, Pg. 05b

Superstars -- be they in sports, entertainment or business -- generally get away with a lot. Too much, really. And we all know why: Money. Fame. Power.

The superstar basketball player gets the calls (or maybe more accurately the non-calls) from the refs. The superstar salesperson gets far more leeway than us mere mortals. The superstar movie producer apparently was able to sexually assault women for years.

But last week, roles reversed, the tide changed, the seas parted, ABC did the right thing, and a racist superstar, Roseanne Barr, met her comeuppance.

Let's not count the ways one can find her tweet about Valerie Jarrett repugnant, because they are almost too numerous to mention. And let's ignore Roseanne's lame excuses and "apologies." As the maker of Ambien noted, "Racism is not a known side-effect."

Instead, let's look at the brave and bold move on the part of ABC to cancel its successful reboot of Roseanne's eponymous sitcom. Consider the stats:

The premiere averaged 18 million viewers. Compare that to the strong return of Will & Grace at 10 million.

It not only was the No. 1 show on ABC this past year, it was the No. 1 show on all of television.

30-second spots on Roseanne sold for a whopping \$400,000.

So it was no little thing for ABC to cancel its hit show. But as ABC Entertainment President Channing Dungey said in a statement, "Roseanne's Twitter statement is abhorrent, repugnant and inconsistent with our values, and we have decided to cancel her show."

There is a lesson there for the rest of us. It's OK to do the right thing, even if it affects the bottom line.

Look, I get it. We small businesses have little room for error. The space for miscues is marginal. When you have someone on your team who is making you a lot of money, it can be difficult to cut ties with that person, even if that person is rude, racist, toxic or worse.

But consider the wise words of Dungey. She fired Roseanne because Roseanne's words and actions were "inconsistent with our values." That's the thing. The best businesses, whether large or small, have things in common. They serve a market need, for sure. And equally, they serve their customers well. But just as importantly, maybe even more importantly, they stand for something. They have values they live by.

The same is likely true for your business and career. Certain things are important to you. Vital even. And sometime, something will happen that will bump up against those values, and you will be called upon to take a stand.

And no, it will not be easy.

Courage never is.

President John F. Kennedy wrote a Pulitzer Prize-winning book, Profiles in Courage. In it, he looked at prominent people who took a stand, even when it was politically unpopular. But they did so because it was the right thing to do.

As his brother, Robert Kennedy, wrote in the Foreword of an edition after JFK's death, "Courage is the virtue that President Kennedy most admired. He sought out those people who had demonstrated in some way, whether it was on a battlefield or a baseball diamond, in a speech or fighting for a cause, that they had courage that they would stand up, that they could be counted on."

So, kudos to Dungey and to ABC Entertainment for having courage, and when the time comes, kudos to you, too.

Steve Strauss, @Steve Strauss on Twitter, is a lawyer specializing in small business and entrepreneurship and has been writing for USATODAY.com for 20 years. Email [sstrauss@mrallbiz.com](mailto:sstrauss@mrallbiz.com).

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