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STORM IN A CUP

IS it any wonder that we have an entire issue focused on what friends and many at the office call “The Greatest Show on Earth”? Browsing photos of friends beaming back from their stadium seats in Brazil, I can almost feel the energy and invigorating roar of the crowd! I love watching things live (admittedly more of a performance art and musical nature) and cheering on my school or country.

In recent years, I have been persuaded to follow several basketball leagues in the Klang Valley and am honestly beginning to understand the depth and madness of World Cup fever. It’s interesting to see the way individuals behave in team sports and, not unlike driving, reveal their true colours. You see the many traits that our writers speak of in their stories this week – both positive and negative.

1. "Ensure focus and keep your eye on the ball. Brazil lost it for three minutes and the dream of millions went to shreds": No matter how we plan and strategize, ‘life can throw you a curve ball’ and we need to focus all the lessons we learned, grounded on our values, to make split-second life-altering decisions.

2. "Defeaters see tragedy, champions see a challenge": Pressure and uncertainty are a part of life and we need to learn to manage it.

3. "You can still win when you lose": Win by giving your best, showing your authenticity and sticking to sportsmanship behaviour – especially when you are a role model to future generations.

4. "It’s the name on the front of the jersey that matters most, not the back": Though the value of and need for teamwork has been inculcated since young, it appears easy to forget or to apply in all aspects of life. Not being truly aligned with a company’s vision and mission sets the scene for ineffective teams with disastrous results.

5. "Victory will not last without change": I’m obliged to say that rest is important (my public health roots are strong), but resting on your laurels (pun intended, albeit somewhat lame) is disastrous results.

Of the leadership lessons that have been identified through football (and there are many!), I would like to highlight these as apply in all aspects of life. Not being truly aligned with a company’s vision and mission sets the scene for ineffective teams with disastrous results.

I leave you with this: “We need to revisit what success/ victory means how well you do it.”

My Starjob.com, Saturday 12 July 2014

KAREN SAYS

Editor

who celebrate and enjoy every moment of life.”

By SARAH TAN

FOOTBALL, as well as many other team sports, is not always about winning and scoring the goals. At the end of the day, team spirit and teamwork is what makes the team.

Good teamwork partly requires a good captain. However, this job is also the duty of the teammates.

Becoming a good team player requires specific characteristics which need to be nurtured, as well as a good attitude. Essentially, these attributes can be applied both on the field and at the workplace.

Listed below are a few characteristics to develop:

RECOGNISE YOUR STRENGTHS

Everyone has something different to bring to the table. In order to be an asset to your team, identify your strengths and build upon them.

We may sometimes feel that our strengths are less compared with others. However, if you develop them to the point that, lessons cannot be taught to a student who refuses to listen. Be open to receive constructive criticism from your teammates.

BE RELIABLE

Some people may complain that they are never delegated any tasks. Unless we are absolutely sure that we have done nothing wrong, let us stop playing the blame game and take a step back.

Evaluate the situation. Think from your team’s perspective. Have you been a dependable worker? Would you trust yourself with important tasks?

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BE A TEAM PLAYER

BE SUPPORTIVE

A supportive player influences the attitudes of his or her surrounding teammates and feeds the team spirit. Given in regular doses, a few words of assurance may increase the overall performance of the team in the long run.

In contrast, a team full of talented players with low morale would not be motivated to win.

BE ADAPTABLE

In every relationship, compromises need to be made. Likewise, the same goes for relationships in a team. Be ready to change yourself for the better to meet the needs of others, even though you may feel reluctant.

Adjust yourself to suit whatever new directions set by your team leader. If you are willing to be flexible, you are sure to learn new things from your team. Do not be a pushover, but remember to open yourself to what others have to offer.

BE TEACHABLE

There is always something new to learn from the people around you. Having said that, lessons cannot be taught to a student who refuses to listen. Be open to receive constructive criticism from your teammates.

If you possess a teachable spirit, you will definitely learn from your mistakes and become a wiser person at the end of the day.

As you go on to your coming week, remember that we cannot always rely on our captain for good teamwork and chemistry. As it is also our duty, let us grow ourselfs to be better teammates to our team.

The opinions expressed in this career guide are those of the writers or the people they quoted and not necessarily those of Leaderonomics.

“Strength does not come from winning. Your struggles develop your strengths. When you go through hardships and decide not to surrender, that is strength.” — Arnold Schwarzenegger

“Experience teaches only the teachable.” — Aloudus Huxley

“Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence wins championships.” — Michael Jordan

“Every single day I wake up and commit to myself to becoming a better player.” — Mia Hamm

“Unity is strength... when there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved.” — Murtie Stephanie

“Ask not what your teammates can do for you. Ask what you can do for your teammates.” — Magic Johnson

“Your talent determines what you can do. Your motivation determines how much you are willing to do. Your attitude determines how well you do it.” — Lou Holtz

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Spain

Spain entered the 2014 World Cup with high expectations. Being defending champions from 2010 and back-to-back European champions, many experts deemed the current Spain squad to be among the greatest national teams in history. During the qualifying stage, Spain made it to the top of its group. However, Spain’s stellar record then was a far cry from their performance at group stages and they were booted out after losing to Netherlands and Chile.

What led to their shocking premature exit from the World Cup?

Technical and tactical disposition

It appears that for the past six years, Spain has played and won using the same formation and tactics with predominantly the same key players. They have not armed themselves with alternatives. Instead, they have become complacent and that allowed other teams to learn their tactics easily. Vicente del Bosque’s conservative selection policy and blind loyalty to his previous team players also saw him field familiar names like Iker Casillas, Xavi and Fernando Torres, in favour of lesser known players.

Team players also saw him field familiar formation policy and blind loyalty to his previous other teams to learn their tactics easily. Instead, they the same key players. They have not armed formation and tactics with predominantly the same key players. They have not armed themselves with alternatives. Instead, they have become complacent and that allowed other teams to learn their tactics easily. Vicente del Bosque’s conservative selection policy and blind loyalty to his previous team players also saw him field familiar names like Iker Casillas, Xavi and Fernando Torres, in favour of lesser known players.

glory with little concern for the team’s achievement. Some young stars have been known to shirk international duty in favour of playing for individual clubs. This could be for monetary gain and the likelihood of facing strong criticism if they were to fail in the international arena. The lack of passion among team members restricts England in achieving success as a team. The role of management is to ensure that players are motivated for the right reasons.

Talent development

With foreign investors flocking to finance major English clubs, the investment in nurturing and growing local young talent is sidelined. Instead, clubs spend more effort on foreign talent due to the need for a quick fix rather than to help develop the club for the long term. Often organisations prefer spending their money, time and effort to acquire talent from outside rather than to invest in developing talent internally, as the latter requires more time and patience.

Leadership

Even with many talented players, Spain was in dire need of a qualified leader on the pitch. This team was clearly missing the leadership of Carlos Puyol and even Xavi to steer them to victory.

The moment they started losing to the Dutch, it was difficult for them to get their act together and rally a comeback.

Ghana

Touted as one of Africa’s hopefuls at the World Cup, expectations were set for them to progress till the knockout rounds. The Ghanaian starters off badly with a loss to the United States (US) but gave a renewed performance against the Germans. All that was needed then was to defeat the Portuguese.

The stage was set for the Ghanaians to qualify as the Germans went on to beat the US team and all that was needed from Ghana was a draw. They lost, and were knocked out from the World Cup. What went wrong?

Well-organised management

The Ghana Footballing Association appeared organised which gave rise to an undesirable incident right before their crucial final match. The player protested and refused to train as they had not received their appearance fees for the World Cup. This affected their performance in the final game and eventually sent them packing.

Relationship and understanding

The bond between players and their manager (as well as among players) serves as a pivotal aspect of a team’s success. This is exemplified in the Dutch team where players and their manager share a close relationship. Because of mutual trust and understanding, it is easier to gain the support of players whenever the manager implements new tactics. Subsequently, players will also be willing to put the team before themselves and strive to serve as components of a well-oiled machine rather than trying to oust one another. This compeitiveness was clearly lacking in the Ghanaian camp, where two of their main stars were reportedly sent home just before the final match due to internal arguments and unprovoked fights.

ITALY

Italy finished first in their group during the qualifiers, unbeaten in all games. With a squad of fresh faces, Italy rested the nation’s hope on young talent; one of the favourites to go far in the World Cup, if not to win it.

With all the world-class players gracing their squad, they were tipped to be an incredibly tough team to beat. Italy was also highly experienced and capable of changing systems from game to game, which is a rare trait in international teams. Even though Italy had more possession than opponents, they failed to utilise these opportunities and ended up with comparatively fewer shots on goal.

Change management

Constant change of tactics and players may be a legitimate reason for Italy’s downfall. Italy used 23 out of the 25 players brought to the tournament. It may have been good as players struggled with the heat, but it did not help the team get into a familiar rhythm.

Teams that are successful always have a fixed formation, with the mobility to change when needed. Constant change may leave players lost and unclear of their roles.

Reliable back up

Faith in scoring was solely on the shoulders of a player like Mario Balotelli, who had an indifferent season for his club AC Milan. He is definitely talented, but whether he will reach his full potential is yet to be seen. Italy did bring along an array of strikers but none seemed to win over the manager’s heart to start the match ahead of Balotelli. Even the main substitute striker, bron Cassano, is not new to indiscipline.

Whether these choices were made by the manager because of blind loyalty or truly there was no one to set up and take over Balotelli’s role, we will only know in the future.

Preparation

Lack of proper physical preparations were evident during the matches as talent alone was unable to win the matches for Portugal. Players were clearly several steps slower than opponents. Coupled with the number of injuries sustained in the first game, it was evident that the players were not as physically well-conditioned as their opponents. Each team that prepared well had the advantage of being ready for unforeseen circumstances and also being mentally stronger during difficult situations.

Trust

Experience is an important asset but the trust placed heavily on the older players had to be coupled with energy and zest of the youth to bring balance to the team. For Portugal, youngsters were not given enough opportunity to contribute and be recognised as important members of the team.

William Carvalho who just came off an astonishingly successful season at club Sporting in Portugal offered qualities that were lacking in the Portugal midfield. Unfortunately, he was not played until it was too late.

When management refuses to inject new blood into the team, they run the risk of not only working around a predictable and stale routine, but also sending the wrong message to the team. The ‘established’ starters will assume that however badly they perform, their place is secure; while the young contenders will feel demotivated upon realising no matter how well they perform, they may not get the opportunity to reach their full potential.

WHERE ARE THOSE FAMOUS FOOTBALL FIVE?

By RISHEN PHILIP

As an avid football fan, the World Cup season definitely brings great joy (and sleepless nights) as I support my favourite team Argentina to lift the World Cup in Brazil. That would be a moment to savour forever.

As the competition comes to a close, look at the top teams touted to excel, but who have failed to live up to expectations. From these teams there are lessons to be learned.

Spain

England

Portugal

Italy

Ghana
THE BITE-GATE INCIDENT

Suarez bit his third victim. This time, the Italian defender Giorgio Chiellini and FIFA has given Suarez a four-month ban from football. Suarez has a history of biting when the game does not go his way. Suarez’s team Liverpool were losing against Chelsea when he bit Branislav Ivanovic. The Ajax cut their losses and moved on.

Dr Saima Latif, a psychologist, states: “Trying to shift the blame is also a classic form of childish behaviour. Most children, when they are confronted with something they have done, will immediately recuse to lying.”

THE REAL REASON

Interestingly, Liverpool and Uruguay fans have called the ban excessive. In fact, Uruguayan President Jose Mujica has described the four-month suspension as a ‘fascist ban’.

Suarez initially told FIFA’s disciplinary panel that he did not deliberately bite Chiellini, claiming he lost his balance and landed on his opponent. A week later, when Barcelona insisted that they would not consider buying him if he did not apologise, he immediately issued a statement of apology. So, why is this ‘adult’ child with a tantrum allowed to get away with it after time? Because he is his country’s and club’s best player and that justifies defending him at all costs.

After his first biting incident, he was immediately sold off from his club Ajax to Liverpool. At Liverpool, he immediately became their star player. This is where the rot began.

After racially abusing Patrick Evra, Suarez refused to apologise or shake his hand. Liverpool players were encouraged by their manager to stand by their player and mock the panel that found him guilty. Instead of taking action against him, the team showered Suarez with affection for being a victim of his success. Liverpool’s reluctance to castigate his bad behaviour gave him license to transgress again, reinforcing what Dr Latif mentioned.

Many Uruguay and Liverpool fans believe that great players need to be given exemptions. But would a top marketing leader be given an exemption if he bit a marketing leader from another company during a conference? Just because someone is talented in one area, it does not give them the licence to ‘bite’ someone else.

SUPERSTARS IN BUSINESS

If you examine the Suarez incident, you will find similar behaviour in many workplaces. Superstar employees are hard to find. When you find one that brings in the numbers and impresses the bosses, there is a tendency to ignore their transgressions and not discipline them. Over time, they realise they have the licence to do whatever they want.

And this cycle repeats itself. The more important the talent becomes, the more likely we are to allow them to go against company values. This happens until it is too late and it causes the company much heartache. Barings Bank crashed to bankruptcy because superstar trader Nick Leeson was given Suarez-like status, leading to its demise.

DISCIPLINE AND PAIN REQUIRED FOR GROWTH

For Suarez to become the best football player in the world, he needs to go through growth pains. These are crucial to everyone’s development. Whilst Liverpool caved for a superstar, they refused to discipline their star when it was necessary. The result – an overgrown child that bites, cheats and hurts others.

So, when the responsibility to discipline shifts from the parent (Liverpool, Uruguay) to the authoritative bodies (English FA disciplinary committee, FIFA), there is bound to be issues.

Claudio Sulser, chairman of the FIFA disciplinary committee said, “Such behaviour cannot be tolerated on any football pitch, and in particular not at a FIFA World Cup when the eyes of millions of people are on the stars on the field.”

Yet, at his club and country, such behaviour was previously celebrated. And it still is being celebrated in Uruguay.

A number of years ago, Wayne Rooney was a young man with a temper who would get carded at almost every game he played. He was already a superstar and touted by many as the greatest ever English talent. Yet, instead of celebrating him and allowing him to do as he pleased, the then Everton manager benched him for his indiscretions.

Over time, his temper and lack of discipline abated, enabling him to thrive at Manchester United. If he was not disciplined then, his career would have stalled.

The same sort of moulding process needs to take place with your top talent. Observe their shortcomings which may later plague the organisation and offer feedback and discipline in early stages of their career. If you wait, they may end up being a Suarez – providing you wonderful performance but at a reputational risk. Never wait for the governing bodies to intervene as it will be too late.

LOSING YOUR TOP TALENT

Professor David Wilson of Birmingham City University says of Suarez, “He first bit in November 2010, when he was playing for Ajax, and then he bit again when he was playing for Liverpool against Chelsea last year.” “The gap between his first and second incidents was 28 months, and the gap between the second and third incidents is 15 months. If I had my criminalical hat on, I would expect the gap between this week’s biting and the next incident to be even shorter.”

Ajax cut their losses and moved on. Liverpool are trying to sell Suarez and move on now.

You may opt to cut your losses and move on, yet there will always be takers for talented people. Other organisations will close an eye and hope for the best in exchange for super performance. And yet, no one will be willing to discipline these talents.

In spite of this, it is much wiser to cut your losses. Bad behaviour is easily learnt and spread throughout your organisation.
THE INFECTED ORGANISATION
Almost always, bad behaviour will be copied by others. If an employee is getting away with not conforming to your company values, others will eventually follow suit. And there will be little you can do to counter that unless you punish your original offenders.

In the case of Suarez, his recent biting episode was immediately copied by 7-year-old schoolboy Harvey Eaglen. Eaglen shocked teachers when he bit a rival on his wrist because it was “what footballers do.”

This happened hours after watching his Anfield idol Suarez sink his teeth into Chiellini. He faces expulsion from school, yet Suarez has never once faced a rival on his wrist because it was “what footballers do.”

So, how do you avoid your organisation from being ‘infected’ by bad apples? If discipline and rehabilitation does not work, cut away the gangrene immediately. Part of Enron’s struggle to contain its bad apples was that the leadership team had allowed its superstars to do as they pleased. As long as results came in, life was great.

The practices that these superstars embraced, although unethical, were quickly embraced by everyone else and it was just a matter of time before the end came.

TURNING NEGATIVES AROUND
The worst thing anyone can do is what Suarez did. He first lied that he lost his balance, then played the victim instead of owning up and only when his transfer to Barcelona was on the line, did he come up with an apology that was clearly not genuine.

Companies adopt this same process when faced with crisis. Instead of being open, there is denial followed by defence.

Many companies, even in Malaysia, face severe backlash when they take this approach. Everyone makes mistakes. People want authenticity and genuine repentance. Admitting a mistake has enabled many companies to turn public relations nightmares into positive situations.

Several decades ago, Johnson & Johnson faced with several deaths linked to its Tylenol product, did not deny nor go on the defensive. Instead, they immediately recalled the products and had honest communications. It was later revealed that the tablets were spiked but their quick action and integrity made Johnson & Johnson one of the most trusted brands in the world.

Companies need to turn negative situations into positive ones by taking control and engaging with the affected parties. Keeping quiet, as Liverpool has done these past few weeks, only aggravates the situation.

FINAL THOUGHTS ON BITE-GATE
Lessons from Bite-Gate and the Suarez scandal? Here are some quick insights:

- Even your most celebrated employee needs to be counselled, disciplined and given feedback, especially on areas in conflict with values and culture
- Most of your employees role-model your ‘star’ employee, even in areas where they may not be ideal role models. Be aware of how this can affect your organisation
- Superstar employees with poor self-awareness will never become great leaders – never promote them into leadership roles or condone their behaviour
- Be quick to remove bad apples if they refuse to change. Tolerating bad apples could have serious repercussions for your organisation
- Finally, never ignore an issue. It will come back to haunt you. Always be truthful and honest. Try to turn negatives into positives

John Maxwell once said, “A man must be big enough to admit his mistakes, smart enough to profit from them, and strong enough to correct them.”

Suarez is a clear example of a person with no self-awareness, no strength of character and no sense of repentance. Make sure you learn from the mistakes of Señor Suarez.

Joshan Thiran is CEO of Leaderonomics and continues to be in awe of the beautiful game. He is looking forward to the World Cup final and is glad Suarez will not be on the field to bite anyone else. You can follow Joshan on LinkedIn and Facebook (www.facebook.com/joshan.thiran.leaderonomics) as he shares various leadership nuggets daily.

THE IRONCLAD ORGANISATION
As long as results came in, life was great.

So, who were the winners in this Bite-Gate saga? The biggest loser was the player himself – Luis Suarez and possibly his country and club. But in every “crisis” there are winners too. The biggest winners of them all – marketers! They had a field day. All good marketers know that conflicts, if mined well, would be golden opportunities.

And so Nando’s, McDonald’s and World Cup sponsor Listerine whose tagline for the World Cup was #PowerToYourMouth, all took advantage and milked it to the max (refer to tweets below).

NANDO’S UK
Hey Luis Suarez, if you’re that hungry, why not get your teeth stuck into something really tasty?
https://twitter.com/NandosUK/status/481502953532228352

LISTERINE GLOBAL
We recommend a good swish after grabbing a bite of Italian
https://twitter.com/ListerineGlobal/status/481515869290639360

MCDONALD’S URUGUAY:
Translated: Hi Luis Suarez, if you are still hungry, come take a bite out of a Big Mac.
https://twitter.com/McDonalds_Uy/status/48150993928155136

We recommend a good swish after grabbing a bite of Italian. #WorldCup #PowerToYourMouth

So, what can we learn from these marketers? The key is to always be ready to take advantage of any opportunity that presents itself. Even if the situations seem unrelated, great marketers understand how to relate that back to their product and use it as an opportunity for publicity.

What are your Suarez-moments that fly by every day? How are you taking advantage and leveraging events and things that happen around you for your product or business?

Remember, only Suarez needs to be the loser at Bite-Gate. The rest of us can actually win! There is ample opportunity. McDonald’s and Nando’s were quick to cash in on the Bite-Gate party and received millions of brand impressions. So can you.
CELEBRATE LIFE

My first World Cup was in 1994 when I watched live at the stadium as England, having beaten Argentina in the semi-finals, lost to West Germany in the final. It was a real eye-opener for me. I recall some of its great lessons to us on Koreans as if I was a fellow countryman.

PRESSURE IS PART AND PARCEL OF THE GAME – LEARN TO MANAGE IT

Last season in the English Premier League, numerous managers were fired within months. The biggest shockwave was the sacking of David Moyes, who was even given a full season in the World Cup. As only one team out of the 32 will emerge as the winners, the whole pressure on the players is massive. Interestingly, it is somewhat similar in business. Business leaders know this, too. They deal with football coaches managing pressure.

In life, we need to do the same. We need to resist what success and in-team orchestrate the present, and forget about future anxiety. Winning or losing the game of life is relative. The real winners are those who celebrate and enjoy every moment of it.

FOOTBALL IS NOT AN 11-MAN GAME

The 2014 World Cup reckoned the most number of substitutes scoring goals. With this, we must acknowledge that football is now a 14-man game. This means that all team members need to know what to bring in the three “trousers” into the game. Bad refereeing decisions can go against your team can cause demolition. This is a game of three 45-minute periods, not 90 minutes. There are constant changes to deal with in your role as leadership changes, media communications and employee-employer, for you flexible enough to change and adapt? Great leaders adapt seamlessly and always have a contingency secondary plan, when things do not pan out as expected.

YOU CAN STILL WIN WHEN YOU LOSE

In the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, there are numerous players who have lost with the World Cup in their hands but held high. Two players who are currently being tracked out in Brazil Football are Bayern Munich’s Colombian James Rodriguez and Tim Howard from the US. Rodriguez’s performances proved to the world he is ready to replace Angel di Maria, Barcelona’s James and Australia’s Cesar Azcarate as the world’s best. Howard’s performances against Brazil in the World Cup, his goal against Australia, his 16 saves in that match, the highest in a World Cup match since 1966, and equally handily stayed and kept the US in the game. At the end of the day, he played for a side lost yet he was declared a man of the match.

So, how do you win when you lose?

1. You win when people see you – both your players played their best, giving everything they could master.
2. You win when you fight to the very end – it could have been easy for Rodriguez and Howard to give up when the odds were against them. But both of them continued to fight to the very end and with the hope of victory.
3. You win when your performance is world-class – despite defeat, both Rodriguez and Howard to give up when everything they could muster.

FLEXIBILITY MATTERS

Every match is a full team, enjoy or surprise will fit. Even backroom decisions are going against your team can cause demolition. This is a game of three 45-minute periods, not 90 minutes. There are constant changes to deal with in your role as leadership changes, media communications and employee-employer, for you flexible enough to change and adapt? Great leaders adapt seamlessly and always have a contingency secondary plan, when things do not pan out as expected.

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SUCCESSFUL COACHES ARE THOSE WHO WIN WAVERING

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DEAN CHOSE TO ATTEND THE SCHOOL DESPITE ITS NOTORIOUS REPUTATION BECAUSE IT HAD GOOD FOOTBALL FACILITIES

By JACK CHUA
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CONSIDE RD ONE of the indomitable legends of football, Dixie Dean made his name scoring 60 league goals during the 1927–1928 season – an unheard of feat all the time and a record that was not beaten until decades later. Today, the Evertonian centre-forward from Birkenhead is remembered as the most prolific goal-scorer England has ever produced – with many comparing him with Lionel Messi and the 1970s’ champion from Germany, Gerd Muller. He was such a notable figure in English football history that a statue in his image was erected outside Goodison Park in May 2001.

Behind it, a wall was constructed out of stones engraved with the names of his closest admirers and fans, a testament to his ability to enthral football lovers, even decades after his death. His amazing feats during the pre-World War II era may have been a bygone incident to football fans who are living through two world wars. Nevertheless, Dixie’s eyes were set on a bigger prize. Everton soon took an interest in his abilities.

In 1925, Everton secretary Thomas H. McIntosh became interested and met him at the Woodside Hotel. Dean signed to join Everton for £3,000 for a season that would prove his money’s worth. He made 32 goals in his first season, impressing his employers and Everton fans thoroughly.

DEFEATISTS SEE TRAGEDY, CHAMPIONS SEE CHALLENGE

In 1926, he met with a motorcycling accident at Holywell, North Wales. Suffering from a badly fractured skull, doctors were doubtful if he could survive for more than a few hours. Even if he did, many believed that that would be his final rest.

Dean was soon to prove the doubts wrong as he made an almost full recovery. Optimistic about his health, he rejoined the league soon after for what was to become some of his most well-remembered seasons.

In the 1927–1928 season he scored a total of 67 goals in three competitions – 60 league goals, three in the FA Cup and four representing England in international matches, an unparalleled achievement in English history. The goals he scored in the league were pivotal in enabling Everton to win the First Division title that season. Despite a slump to the Second Division in 1930–1931, Dean persevered with his team and finally succeeded in restoring their winning place in the First Division in 1932 with a total of 42 league goals.

His team also bagged the FA Cup in 1933 thanks to a victory-defining goal he scored during the finals. Dean was not left out in the international scene either, having represented England 16 times, scoring 18 goals in eight games. Dean went on to play for three football clubs after leaving Everton. The onset of World War II and his declining health led to his retirement in 1940.

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A TRIBUTE TO THE UNSUNG HEROES IN FOOTBALL

BY VINESH NAIDU

Greatest show on Earth

1. Sports Psychologist. A bit of a New Age addition. Just 10 years ago, any athlete seen with a shrink would have been classified a loony, unsuitable for the sports arena. Now that's what you call a truly global phenomenon.

2. Kit Men. It's a contact sport, and you need clean clothes and good sturdy protective paraphernalia. Kit men. They are charged with ensuring that the team plays in optimum condition. Even the grass is always maintained at the correct length and moistness to ensure the team plays in optimum condition: Long ball or short passing? It all depends on how long the grass is today.

3. Nutritionist. As the adage goes, you are what you consume. More than ever, athletes have to adhere to a strict diet of healthy and energy-filled foods to keep them in peak physiological condition.

4. Grounds Men. A lesser known fact for most fans – the length of the grass plays a huge role in the way teams are able to pass the ball.

5. Conditioning coach. This brings us to the next, the conditioning coach. Sports science has enabled enough of a breakthrough in human physiological knowledge to understand that not every person reaches peak performance the same way.

So you can't just make 40 school boys run their lungs out every two days and expect to see mini Usain Bolts at the end of the year.

Athletes today are commodities and require customised attention keep them at peak physical condition under various conditions. These include slight changes in weather that can impact their fluid loss rate as well as body thermoregulation.

It's the conditioning coach's responsibility that each and every athlete is ready for the day's training or match.

PRACTICALITY IN ORGANISATIONS

I saw similarities here with a growing trend in companies to focus resources on ensuring the right culture is developed internally.

Right culture helps to condition the mental and physical contribution levels of employees and it is much too great an issue to be left to chance – as is leaving an athlete to manage his own physiological condition. Get the condition of the athlete right for peak performance and reap the benefit.

Similarly, condition the employee through the right culture, pressure points and challenges, and watch your empowerment through extension, your organisation grow.

Football today is a paradox. For most things operating within a capitalistic framework, the moment it becomes big business, it loses touch with its roots.

The key to sustaining this success seems to have been by ensuring that the supporting roles and structures of the game, personnel as well as infrastructure, are brought up to speed with the pace of expansion.

So every team has a different preference, usually dictated by the tactics of the manager, and this is then ensured by a designated team of grounds men. They are charged with ensuring that the grass is always maintained at the correct length and moistness to ensure the team plays in optimum condition: Long ball or short passing? It all depends on how long the grass is today!

Who is keeping your operations; operationally tweaked to strategy? We all know about the CEO, but what is the COO and is his or her team actually directing the day-to-day translation of the vision?

If you can’t name all the players, the ones who actually help form a team? Who actually appear on TV, glossy magazines, hair gel advertisements and NEVER four years, something small becomes a non-vested party can provide key insightful questions.

An external coach is sometimes a great sounding board as a non-vested party can provide key insightful questions.

In order to maximise their physiological conditions and this includes helping the body recover from exertions after training and games.

Now that’s what you call a truly global phenomenon.

In my opinion, our teams at our national level are similar. There are plenty of supply colonizers the way some people here would think Brazil was the world’s biggest fan base. But who makes up the team? Ask any fan worth his or her salt, and they will easily roll off the first 11 of their respective favourite teams and then stutter through the next three or four names and finally give you a blank stare when you ask about the remaining eight players who make up the substitutes.

If you can’t name all the players, the ones who actually appear on TV, glossy magazines, hair gel advertisements and even KFC, what more the army of people who actually help form a team? If you think about it, our teams at our national level are similar. There are plenty of support cast that we don’t normally consider critical to operations yet without them, plenty of processes break down. Who are these unsung heroes? Who is it that ensures conditions are just right for these players to be at their peak to bring glory to self and nation?

In tribute to the notion that many parts make a team, I am sharing with you some of the lesser known, less glamorous roles that form the contingent that makes up a football team.

You aren’t going to see these guys on TV, well, maybe if he does something not very flattering – like celebrate a goal, step on a bottle and promptly twist his ankle, as one is wont to do. Here’s watching you English physiotherapists, the irony of it all.

So here goes, five people who help make football successful without actually scoring a goal!
His high profile has resulted in lucrative sponsorship deals being offered to him after his retirement, such as Opel, the car manufacturer, and Castrol Oil – one of the sponsors of Euro 2008, as their brand ambassador. Originally trained as a financial consultant and currently a financial adviser by trade, Collina continues to help oversee officials in Italy’s Serie A and Serie B and is responsible for the preparation, selection and appointment of referees. He holds a degree in Business Studies from the University of Bologna and an honorary degree from the University of Hull, and was conferred the title of Commendatore dell’Ordine al Merito della Repubblica Italiana, one of the highest honours in Italy in 2003 by the then Italian President Carlo Azeglio Ciampi for his contributions to sports.

Collina offers the following tips on the different aspects of preparation before a referee walks onto the pitch:

- **Know the rules of the game.** Basic preparation would be to know the rules and how to interpret those rules with consistency, i.e. to make the same decisions in the same kind of situation.
- **Be an athlete among athletes.** Normally, refereeing in top levels requires participation in training programmes for four to five days a week to keep the body in good condition, taking into account that the average age of a player is 25–32 years old, as compared to the average age of a referee which is 30–40 years old.
- **Know everything about the match beforehand.** A referee ought to know how the teams and the individual players usually play and to know all there is to know about the coming game.

**MAKING DECISIONS UNDER PRESSURE**

Part and parcel of being a referee is having to make decisions in fractions of a second under stressful circumstances. Decision-making is one skill which cannot be taught. It is something you have to learn, he opines. According to Collina, going through the different levels of experiences – from his earlier jobs at youth competitions, all the way through the higher levels provided him the different background and experiences which moulded him into what he is today.

The experiences helped develop his decision-making skills based on analysis, intuition, experience and emotions. Being a referee at 17 which involved players who were older also helped him mature and build his personality, he continues.

Although making mistakes is part of the job and a risk every referee has to go through, Collina muses over the possibility of all the hard work and experiences being destroyed merely by one mistake made.

“Being at the top means you’ve got something different from others and shows you have been doing a very good job to be there. However, the possibility of a wrong decision of the match you are refereeing could destroy the hard work you have put in in the past.”

“So, you can be remembered as the referee of the World Cup finals if everything goes well. If something goes wrong, you get known for the wrong reasons although you made 100 other good decisions in the same match,” he adds. Collina points out that there are decisions that a referee just cannot make erroneously and the difference between a decision-maker and a successful decision-maker is the capability of the latter to get it right for the critical decisions that he or she needs to make.

**ALWAYS LOOK FORWARD AND NEVER LOOK BACK**

What would be the best way to deal with a situation after realising you have made a mistake, especially with the pressure coming from all quarters? Collina advises, “First of all, you need to understand why you committed the mistake. This is something crucial to avoid repetition of the same mistake in the future.”

He emphasises the importance of coming back stronger than before and not to continue pondering over the mistake.

Once you have understood why you made the mistake, it is important to move forward especially if you have to make many other decisions in future, he says.

Asked whether there are similarities which define a successful business-man and a successful football team, he responds, “They are many things that are done in football or in other sports to succeed that can be easily applied in the business perspective. Teamwork is one such example.”

“In every team sport, it’s true that talent could help a team win a match, but it is very difficult to win a league simply because you have a single great player,” he explains.

Similarly, in business, when a team-mate fails, team support is important in order for the team to take him back to the top.

Being a referee who is much respected and revered is an every corner of the football world, Collina does not have any particular person whom he looked up to as a role model. "I don’t think you have to copy someone or someone, but it’s important to take the best from everywhere or everyone."

He draws his inspiration and obtains his lessons throughout his career not only from the older, but also from the younger generation.

He claims, “I have to say that I learned a lot from the younger generation at the end of my career, because they bring new and different perspectives into this job. You cannot look at them only as the newcomers, but instead be open and learn from them to continue to be successful. That’s what I did.”

That’s the hallmark of a true leader – constantly learning and growing.

**ADVICE ON SUCCESS**

When asked for his advice to persons who aspire to be great in their lives and to be successful in whatever field they are in, the man with the whistle concludes: “Work. Be very committed. Stay focused and always prepared.”

These are the very traits that exemplify his life to a large extent.

For the full interview and other Leaderonomics Show interviews, find us on Youtube at leaderonomicsmedia
**THE GAME PLAN**

**INTEGRATING LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM THE WORLD CUP**

By AVINASH KUMAR MANOHARAN

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**S**ome say football is just a game. It may be just a game to some, but it really is so much more. Today, not only is football the most widely played sport on the planet, it also has the highest fan database compared to any other sport. When you talk about football, the next thing that comes to your mind is the World Cup.

As a hardcore football fan, I have been sacrificing my sleep lately to catch the World Cup games. What I can conclude is that this year’s World Cup is not short of goals and game-winning moments, but it also offers plenty of leadership lessons to inspire your team. The idea of taking leadership lessons from sports is a common one, and football does not fall short.

**Shoot for the goal and if you miss, you’ll land among your team**

The greatest teams in football are always the one with great teamwork. Individuals can prove to be game changers, but unless chemistry is established between the players, the team cannot be a real winner. Portugal came into the World Cup as a one-man team. When Cristiano Ronaldo failed to reach the heights compared to any other sport. When you talk about football, the next thing that comes to your mind is the World Cup.

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**The game is not over until the final whistle is blown**

In a game between the Netherlands and Mexico, the Dutch were 1-0 down with two minutes to go until the final whistle. In the 88th minute, Dutch midfielder Wesley Sneijder scored, bringing the game to a tie. The 94th minute goal by Dutch striker Klaas-Jan Huntelaar confirmed a place for the Netherlands in the quarter-finals by beating Mexico in extra time.

Good leaders never give up and pace themselves to last for the full game. Until the final whistle was blown, the Dutch players never once let their spirit be shaken even when the odds were against them.

**The name on the front of the jersey matters most, not the one on the back**

Individuals, no matter how talented they are, can also be the team’s downfall. The shameful action of Luis Suarez biting the Italian player Giorgio Chiellini during the game brought the Uruguayan team into disrepute. Another incident includes the outburst of Ghana players, Kevin-Prince Boateng and teammate Sulley Muntari towards their coach and management staff. Both players were suspended from their national duty because of their immature actions.

**Every round offers a chance to learn, be it a win or a loss**

Algeria, having never reached the knockout stage for the last three World Cups, had little expectations to reach it this time. Having drawn in the same group with Russia, Belgium and South Korea, Algeria was ruled out of any chances at the early stages. However, as the World Cup progressed, Algeria shocked everyone when it qualified for the first time into the World Cup knockout stage. It met Germany in the round of 16 where it shocked the world again.

Putting an amazing performance against the highly favoured Germany bringing the game into extra time, but it was unlucky as it lost to Germany 2-1. However, at the end of the day, Algeria’s journey in the World Cup was something to highlight. From the first game played against Belgium to the game against Germany, Algeria showed great improvements in the way it played. In every process the key is to excel and always improve.

**A good leader never stops learning and always improves his/her game by practising what he/she had learned. They are the ones who make an impact in the long haul.**

By Avinash Kumar Manoharan, 21, is a chemical engineering student in Universiti Teknologi Petronas who is very passionate towards empowerment of youth leadership in society today. He was previously the local committee president of AIESEC in Universiti Teknologi Petronas, a student run organisation that provides students with leadership and exchange opportunities. Avinash is also a die-hard fan of the Arsenal Football Club and the national football team Harimau Malaya.
COACH BOONE: You go, that’s good you’re gonna need it, you go, aggression that’s even better you’re gonna need that, too. But any little two-year-old child can throw a full football is about controlling that anger, harnessing that aggression into a team effort to achieve perfection!

FORMING

The first stage is Forming, where individuals come together to find out their roles. The scene that comes to mind is the first meeting between Coach Herman Boone and Coach Bill Yoast, played by Denzel Washington and Will Patton respectively. They both consented to working as two different units, Coach Boone as head coach and Coach Yoast as defensive coach. Right of the bat, expectations and values are set. They are tasked to integrate a group of young men that is racially divided, to make them a winning football team.

During the forming stage, it is the leader’s responsibility to make clear the direction and roles of the members. There will be those who will push the boundaries and even size up situations like Gerry Bertier. Bertier took it upon himself as captain of the team. He is the only “All American” (equivalent to the star of the team) on the team to tell Coach Boone what he should play. All Coach Boone did to defuse the situation was to ask whose team was it? Was it Bertier’s team or Coach Boone’s? Making Bertier answer the question is a sure way to get the message across.

The other major decision Coach Boone made was to create the intercommunication process within the team. Being a racially diverse team, he saw that the footballers grouped themselves based on race when entering the team buses. Coach Boone strategically ordered them to sit in the bus based on offensive and defensive players, ensuring that they sit with someone of a different race. It was a decision specifically to set expectations for the players.

STORMING

The Storming stage is where the team faces great challenges, but of great importance. Dr. Tuckman states that in this stage, there will be many conflicts within the team. For example, the pivotal confrontation between two of the team’s best talent, Bertier and Julius Campbell. What happened was a confrontation where Bertier’s leadership was questioned.

Campbell confronts Bertier on why he is the leader, he had not said anything about his white players not blocking for the black quarterback named Rev. “I’m supposed to wear myself out for the team? What team? Nah, nah what I’m gonna do is look out for myself and get mine,” says Campbell.

Bertier replies, “See that is the worst attitude I have ever heard,” to which Campbell responds, “Attitude reflects leadership, captain.” These types of conflicts help team members develop crucial interpersonal communication processes, i.e. the honesty to say what needs to be said. After the confrontation, Bertier starts playing his role as captain where he scolds his white teammates on their lack of effort in their tasks, thereby gaining the respect of not just Campbell but the whole team.

A great leader knows how to use this storming stage to great advantage. To demonstrate the effective use of this stage is the scene where Coach Boone wakes the whole team at 3am to go on a run in a field. The field they had run to was where the battle of Gettysburg was fought. It was the historic battle during the civil war between the confederate army and the Union. Coach Boone recounts the men who died on that very field, fighting the same fight they were still fighting to that day.

“Take a lesson from the dead. If we don’t come together right now on this hallowed ground, we too will be destroyed, just like they were. I don’t care if you like each other of not, but you will respect each other. And maybe, I don’t know, maybe we’ll learn to play this game like men.” As a result, when the team came back from camp, they were all singing and laughing together as a team.

NORMING

That signifies the start of the Norming stage where the team begins to come together. The leader’s task here is to groom a sense of togetherness among team members. It will come to a point when the individuals take it upon themselves to ensure the sense of togetherness is intact.

The warm-up scene is the perfect example. As team spirit started to dissipate due to the community tearing them apart because of their own separate races, the team decided to do something unique to further unite the group.

Against the unbeaten Groveton Lions, the T.C. Williams Titans decided to warm up through dance. Creating something fun builds team identity as well as team spirit. It gets the team excited before a big game or presentation. The power of a team chant right before going into a project is something quite remarkable.

The final stage of team development is the Performing stage. This is the period where the team performs at its optimum or even regularly exceeding their own expectations. The team knows each other so well that they can lose a teammate yet still maintain a high performance effort. The members not only know their roles, but recognise all their team members’ weaknesses and strengths.

During this stage, team spirit has grown very strong. Team glory comes first before the individual’s. In the movie, during the final game when the team was losing, Alan Bosley sacrificed his position to give it to Petey Jones who was better suited for the game.

Coach Yoast and Coach Boone also put their pride away and asked for each other’s help in order to maintain their perfect record and win the championship. It is always a process building high performing teams. The importance of a leader lies in these stages to benefit the team is key.

There were many key decisions. Coach Boone took during each stage of team development, from separating the team into different buses (forming), harnessing their anger to a team effort (storming), letting the players warm up while singing (norming) and finally, when the two coaches put aside their differences for the benefit of the team (performing).

It is not easy creating a team. There will always be challenges and roadblocks that stop a team from performing. But before the team implodes, we can remember the Titans and learn to work together to achieve that perfection. As Campbell says, “Individually, I am not perfect but this team is”. — Yasir Osman is a part of the Youth Division of Leaderonomics and is passionate about inspiring youth towards leadership excellence. He is part of Youth Media that creates video and internet content for leadership development. A great fan of movies, he also plays a part in developing young leaders through a series of Camps known as DIDDIE Camps. If you are interested in developing yourself as a young leader, you can email him or visit our site at http://www.leaderonomics.com/diddecamps/