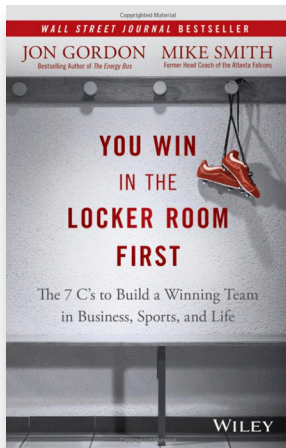


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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Jon Gordon

Jon Gordon is the author of numerous bestselling books and an inspirational speaker.

Mike Smith

Mike Smith is the former head coach for the NFL's Atlanta Falcons from 2008 – 2014.

You Win in the Locker Room First

THE SUMMARY

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Summary Note: *The book is written in an essay format. The authors of each sub-section are identified by their initials.*

Chapter 1: Culture

(MS) I've always believed that culture is defined and created from the top down, but it comes to life from the bottom up. This meant that I had to build our culture by working with the leadership group (i.e., the owner, general manager, and executives), the coaching staff, and the football team. To strengthen the culture among the leadership group, it was important to reiterate to the owner, team president, and general manager the shared beliefs, values, and expectations that we had discussed in depth when I was interviewing for the head coaching position. It was important to have collaborative conversations on a regular basis to discuss the changes we were making and why we were making them.

Culture consists of the shared purpose, attitudes, values, goals, practices, behaviors, and habits that define a team or organization. Many coaches focus only on the culture shared by the players, but the fact is that everyone in an organization shapes the culture. To be successful, you need everyone in your organization thinking, believing, talking, and behaving in sync. You need everyone to be aligned with the same beliefs, expectations, behaviors, and habits.

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(JG) Culture drives expectations and beliefs. Expectations and beliefs drive behaviors. Behaviors drive habits and habits create the future. If you look at the most successful organizations in business, sports, health care, and education you notice they all have great cultures. Indeed, X's and O's are overrated. I once spoke at a football clinic years ago on the topic of culture. I had five people in my session. The workshop on X's and O's had 500 people in it. I knew then that most people don't understand that X's and O's won't sustain success. Culture will. You must spend more time on building your culture than on everything else. Culture is what produces wins over time. If you are looking to build a new culture or transform the one you have, the first questions you should ask yourself are, "What do we stand for?" and "What do we want to be known for?" When you know what you stand for you can find the right people who stand for the same things as you. Brad Stevens, the head coach of the Boston Celtics, told me that your culture is not just your tradition. It is the people in the locker room who carry it on. When you have people who fit your culture and carry it on, it comes to life in a powerful way.

Knowing what you stand for is just as important in the business world. When Apple was just the two Steves (Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak), they knew the culture they wanted to create. They wanted to challenge the status quo. Everything they did was influenced by their culture including the people they hired, the products they created, and the campaigns they ran. This approach still influences everything at Apple. Apple is famous for saying that culture beats strategy. What you stand for drives everything else.

(MS) Knowing what you stand for is essential. From the moment I took over as the coach of the Atlanta Falcons, I knew the kind of culture we needed to create, and I defined it for the team. The seven responsibilities I expected everyone to adhere to were:

1. Have fun, work hard, and enjoy the journey.
2. Show respect for every person you have contact with in the organization.
3. Put the team first. Successful teams have teammates that are unselfish and willing to put their individual goals behind the team's goals.
4. Do your job. It is defined, but you must always be prepared for it to change (especially if you're a player).
5. Appropriately handle victory and defeat, adulation and humiliation. Do not get too high in victory or too low in defeat. Be the same person every day.
6. Understand that all organizational decisions aim to make the team better, stronger, and more efficient.
7. Have a positive attitude. Use positive language (both verbal and body language).

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I told our team each year that if we were able to consistently meet these expectations, then we would be well on our way to establishing a culture where team members can thrive in the ultimately competitive NFL. I also made it very clear from the beginning that we were going to be a team that focused on the process of preparing for each practice and game, not on the outcome of our entire season.

Milestones and process were a big part of our culture and philosophy those first five years and, as a result, we had unprecedented success as a team and organization. Sometimes success can be your worst enemy if you allow it to change your culture and approach. Jon had often told me that if you focus on the fruit and ignore the root, the tree will die, but if you continue to care for the root and focus on your culture, process, people, and purpose, then you'll always have a great supply of fruit.

Chapter 2: Contagious

(JG) Research from the Heart Math Institute shows that when you have a feeling in your heart, it goes to every cell in the body, then outward—and other people up to 10 feet away can sense feelings transmitted by your heart. This means that each day you are broadcasting to your team how you feel. You are broadcasting either positive energy or negative energy, apathy or passion, indifference or purpose. Research from Harvard University also supports that idea that the emotions you feel are contagious and affect the people around you. Your team is just as likely to catch your bad mood as the swine flu, and on the flip side, they will catch your good mood as well. This principle applies to everyone, not just the leader. Each member of your team is contagious and every day you all are either sharing positive or negative energy with each other.

Great cultures are built with positive contagious energy so it's essential that you and your team share it. When you walk into the locker room, the office, or onto the field, you have a decision to make. Are you going to be a germ to your team or a big dose of vitamin C? Will you infuse your team with positive energy or be an energy vampire and suck the life out of them? Great leaders and teams are positively contagious with a vision and purpose that drives them, positive thoughts that fuel them and emotions that energize them. Great leaders and teammates realize that their overall attitudes affect everyone in the locker room and the building.

A powerful way for leaders to be contagious is to share a positive vision and mission with their team. Every team needs a vision and mission to unite them and serve as a North Star to guide them in the right direction. Your vision and mission should be simple, clear, bold, and compelling. I'm not talking about a string of buzzwords and jargon that mean nothing to your team members, but rather something tangible and exciting to serve as a rallying cry and focal point for your team. Taking an example from the business world, long before "Let's Build a Smarter Planet" was IBM's advertising tagline, the phrase served as an internal vision and mission for everyone to sell, build, and design projects that made data more useful for clients.

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Research shows that people are most energized when they are contributing to a bigger cause beyond themselves. As a leader, you want to inspire your team to move beyond their own selfish desires and concerns and contribute to a cause bigger than them. When your team has a greater vision and purpose they will play with greater passion and energy. I can't tell you what your vision and mission should be, but I can tell you they are essential to unite and rally your team. You can create this vision, mission, and purpose as a leadership group and share it with your team. When possible, create it with your team members.

Leadership is a transfer of belief and it's essential that you share positive beliefs with your team, especially from the beginning. The minute the season starts, it's time to set the tone and cultivate the right belief system. You can't wait until adversity happens to do this. Start from the beginning, and you will be strong when challenges come your way. I'm convinced one of the most important things a leader must do is to be positive and optimistic. The research supports this and actually shows that optimism is a competitive advantage.

(MS) I discovered that when I approached the challenges of the day with a positive, helpful attitude to serve others, it not only lifted up my spirits, but also set the tone for the entire organization and helped everyone perform at their highest levels. Keep in mind that your attitude is reflected in your body language, facial expressions, demeanor, and the inflection in your voice. The leaders of the team or organization set the tone and attitude. Every moment of the day someone on the team or organization is taking cues from you. A positive approach takes practice and a different mindset, but it's well worth the effort.

In an ideal situation you would have one contagious leader or mentor in every position group on the team. Think of each position group as a separate department within an organization. The most successful teams that I have been around are the ones that have this contagious leadership and mentoring in each position group.

(JG) One person can't make a team but one person can break a team. To build a positively contagious team you must not only feed the positive with a positive vision, belief, and attitude but you must also weed the negative from your team. You must literally post a sign that says, "No Energy Vampires Allowed," and tell your team that you will not allow negativity to sabotage the vision you have and the team you expect to become.

(MS) When it comes to weeding the negativity from your team you must also weed the subtle sources like complaining in addition to overt negativity like energy vampires. While it's obvious who your energy vampires are, complaining can often grow undetected beneath the surface and, if left to breed, it can have disastrous effects on your team as well.

What we think matters. Our words are powerful. Our body language is always being evaluated. The energy we share with our teammates and co-workers is essential. Instead of complaining, we

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focused on gratitude and appreciation for the chance to compete, to play a game we love, and the opportunity to get better. If you are complaining, you are not leading. If you are leading, you are not complaining. Great leaders are contagious, and I encourage you to spend more time sharing a positive vision, belief, attitude, and encouragement with your team. If you do this, you won't allow yourself to have a bad day and you'll give yourself and your team a better chance to have a great day.

Chapter 3: Consistent

(MS) I see it all too often. Coaches will begin the season with one philosophy and attitude, only to change their approach and attitude when the team starts to lose. As a leader you must be consistent in your leadership style, approach, attitude, philosophy, and tactics. If you start off being supportive and friendly with players, you can't go from being a players' coach to someone everyone hates. You can't go from encouraging to condescending. If you are not consistent throughout the year you will lose your team's trust, and as soon as that happens, you lose the locker room and in turn lose games. Please know this doesn't mean you won't have moments of anger or frustration. We all do. If you are a coach with high expectations who yells at times, your team will know that's your style and they will expect that from you. The key is to be who you are and coach the way you do all year long no matter what your win-loss record is. Your team must know what to expect from you. They must see that you stick to your principles and philosophy through adversity and challenges. You must be the same coach at 0-8 as you are 8-0. It's hard to do, especially when you are losing and the pressure mounts, but if you don't, then you are doomed for failure. The character you possess during the drought is what your team will remember during the harvest.

(JG) Being consistent isn't easy. Challenging situations, daily stress, and distractions can knock us off track. It's easy to lose our way. As a leader I want to encourage you to heed the advice of Pete Carroll, who when asked by my friend Rod Olson to describe his greatest challenge said, "My greatest challenge right now is to be consistent myself. I must be the 'same guy' all the time. I must be relentless in my pursuit of being consistent. I must discipline myself to be fully present so I can be in the moment with each person or player. Then we have a chance to maximize the moment together. My challenge is to be so consistent and optimistic, that every person in the organization feels that tomorrow will be better than today and we expect it to be."

To build a winning team, you want to be consistent in your attitude, effort, and actions. Have a great attitude all the time so you can give your best in everything you do. Focus on becoming the best version of yourself every day. Don't change with the wind; instead, be like a strong-rooted tree that does not waver, regardless of what is happening around it. Be the kind of leader everyone knows they can trust and count on.

(MS) Every team and organization must guard against the disease of complacency. It can be very subtle in its early stages. In fact, it can go almost unnoticed. It is imperative that the leader of the organization not allow the seeds of complacency to germinate within the team. If they do,

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complacency will multiply faster than the most invasive weed. You become complacent when team members start to believe that their prior success is going to ensure that they will have success in the future.

Complacency has led to the demise of many teams, organizations and companies because they were not looking forward and instead rested on their laurels while their competitors were doing everything in their power to overtake them. At the end of each year, you must go through an extensive evaluation of the entire organization to identify what you did well and where you fell short of your expectations. The most important aspect of this exercise is to identify how you are going to make sure that you are going to innovate and improve in the future. When you focus on the process instead of the destination, you make your desire to be great your number-one priority, so you won't allow the disease of complacency to set in. Being consistently complacent is something you definitely don't want. What you do want is consistent improvement, consistent coaching, and a consistent desire to be great.

(JG) Two words that characterize a team that is always improving and growing are "humble" and "hungry." Whether you are a team trying to become a winner or you have achieved the pinnacle of success, it's important to remember the following:

Be Humble

- Don't think you know it all. See yourself as a life-long learner who is always seeking ways to learn, grow, and improve.
- See everyone, including your competition, as teachers and learn from everyone.
- Be open to new ideas and strategies to take your work and team to the next level.
- When people tell you that you are great, don't let it go to your head. (And when they tell you that you stink, don't let it go to your head.)
- Live with humility because the minute you think you have arrived at the door of greatness it will get shut in your face.
- Remember that today's headlines are tomorrow's fish wrap.

Be Hungry

- Seek out new ideas, new strategies, and new ways to push yourself and your team out of your comfort zone.

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- Be willing to pay the price that greatness requires. Don't be average. Strive to be great.
- Become the hardest working team you know.
- Love the process and you'll love what the process produces.
- Make your life and work a quest for excellence. Every day ask how you can be better today than you were yesterday.
- Don't rest on past laurels. Make your next work your best work.

Chapter 4: Communicate

(JG) Communication is the foundation of every great relationship. Communication builds trust. Trust generates commitment. Commitment fosters teamwork, and teamwork delivers results. Without great communication you don't have the trust to build a strong relationship. Without strong relationships you can't have a strong team. In fact, most marriages break down because of poor communication. Most teams break down because of poor communication. I have found that where there is a void in communication, negativity will fill it. Without great communication, negativity fills the void and it breeds and grows, resulting in negative contagious energy that quickly spreads.

(MS) I realize it's not easy to consistently have one-on-one communication with everyone in the organization. I realize you can't meet with everyone all the time, especially if you lead a large organization. The key is to meet with your leadership team and the people you lead directly, and then make sure they are communicating well with the people they lead. If everyone does this throughout the organization, relationships, teamwork, and performance will improve dramatically. I'm also a big believer in having an open-door policy to encourage interaction and let everyone know that you are always available to talk. This lets your team know that you are always there for them, and when you make the time and effort to communicate with them it comes back to you tenfold. Besides, the only way to really get to know your team and have them know you is to interact with them one on one.

People often think of communication as talking, but for me it's all about listening. The best communicator is not the person who is the most eloquent speaker, but the person who has the ability to listen, process the information, and use it to make decisions that are in the best interest of the team and organization. The best listeners truly hear what a person is saying and trying to convey.

As head coach you must trust your coordinators and not micro-manage, but you must also question them and question your team to ultimately make the best decisions. Just as Abraham Lincoln would ask his advisors questions and receive different ideas and competing strategies before eventually making his decisions, coaches and all leaders must do the same. To be the most effective leader possible, you have to take the temperature of the building. I am not talking about what

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the thermometer reads. I am talking about the pulse of the team and the energy in the building. Oftentimes leaders will only concern themselves with the temperature of the organization when things are not going well. This can be a big miscalculation. It is just as important to know what the vibes are when things are going well.

To do this you want to use all the resources that are available to get a read on the building. You don't want to just rely on a few leaders and decision makers to get your information. Players will act differently in the presence of the head or assistant coach than they will if the coach or supervisor is not around. The best way to gauge the temperature is to have different "thermometers" around the building. Members of the training staff, equipment managers, communications staff, and the player development team are invaluable. I would literally walk around and ask these people, "What's the temperature today?" and they would share priceless information. I became aware of many different situations, both positive and negative, by asking what the temperature was and having these conversations.

As a leader you can't just speak to other leaders who have a similar vantage point as you. You have to engage people who are closest to the potential challenges facing your organization. You have to ask questions, listen, and learn, and then decide how to use the readings to make decisions going forward. A big part of taking the temperature of the building is leading by walking around. You can't make great decisions by sitting in your office. The most effective leaders are the ones who are mobile and visible throughout the building, not just in the office but also in the training room, locker room, and cafeteria. You lead by leaving a footprint in every area of the building. When you interact with your team and organization all over the building you break down that separation of upstairs and downstairs, office and locker room.

Beyond one-on-one communication, a big part of any coach's job is to share key messages, themes, and principles with your team. Each year we had a theme for the season that we presented to the team during the off-season. We would also have weekly themes and messages that were presented at the Wednesday team meeting and were applicable to the upcoming game. While there are many ways in which you can present the yearly and weekly messages, it's critical to make sure that you drive the message home the first time you present it. Then, after the first presentation, you want to make sure you reinforce the themes and messages over and over again, almost until they become annoying to the players. You have to say them so often that they become ingrained in their minds. You want these themes and messages at the forefront of the thoughts of every player, coach, and member of the organization for the entire season.

It is also essential that your leadership team (in my case it was the assistant coaches) also share and reinforce the same messages with the team. The message can't come from only one person and you can't have different messages coming from different leaders. Every leader in the organization must be echoing the same beliefs and sharing the same message, especially the mentors and leaders in the locker room. The message must be consistent both in spoken words and actions. Coaches and

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leaders can't just talk about the message, they must model the message. If you don't live it, neither will your team. But if you are consistent with your messages in words and deeds you will build trust and strengthen your culture and team. Consistent messaging is essential to a team's success.

People often ask me how a leader knows if the message is getting through and I tell them it's simple. You know that the message was accepted by the team when you hear it being talked about in the locker room, on the practice field, in the cafeteria, the training room, and to the media.

(JG) To add to Mike's thoughts about communicating your message to your team, it's also key to have outside voices reinforce the messages and themes that you are sharing. I once had a CEO say to me, "Jon, never underestimate the power of an outside voice." I had just spoken at his company's annual meeting and he said, "We brought you here to reinforce our message. Our folks get tired of hearing us say it, but when it comes from an outside voice it's new, fresh, and exciting."

Chapter 5: Connect

(JG) A great benefit of communicating and collaborating is that they develop connections between you and your team members. Communication begins the process of building trust, collaboration fosters this process and enhances relationships, and this leads to stronger connections between team members. This is crucial because when you have stronger connections, you have a more committed and powerful team. A connected team becomes a committed team.

The more I have worked with teams over the years, the more I realize that connection is the key to becoming a great team. A lack of connection between team members leads to below-average teamwork and sub-par performance and results. Connection is the difference between a team that thrives and one that crumbles. One of the biggest complaints I receive from coaches is that their teams aren't connected. They have a bunch of young men or women who usually focus on themselves, their personal goals, their social media followings, and their egos. They also have family and friends telling them they should be playing more, scoring more, or getting more recognition. The message they receive from the world is that it's all about the individual, not the team. It's about me, not we. This creates a disconnect between personal goals and team goals, and it undermines the team. I have found that when coaches and players focus on becoming a connected team, the "me" dissolves into "we". The individual silos come crumbling down, bonds are strengthened, relationships are developed, and the team is much more connected, committed, and stronger.

(MS) We have so many different ways that we can communicate with one another, but unfortunately, we are connecting less meaningfully. We are designing machines that function like people and, in turn, are turning people into machines. I have seen a change over the last couple of years in regard to face-to-face interaction in the locker room. More guys are connecting with their devices than with each other. This became alarming as I saw team members missing opportunities to cultivate relationships. The best teams I have been around were teams that enjoyed being around each other.

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When you are a team that does not connect, you will be a team that fails to win.

When you are dealing with professional adults, it's difficult to tell them to put their phones away, but I do believe it's a topic that everyone should discuss. As a team you must recognize the importance of connecting with each other and identify ways you can make these connections happen. You might have a no-phone zone, or a no-phone time during road trips to encourage conversation. Some teams stay off social media during the season. Other teams allow it. Every team is going to be different and certain ideas will work for some teams and not others. The key is to agree on ways and times to unplug from technology and plug into each other.

Please know that I'm not anti-technology. I believe it's very valuable if utilized the right way. I don't think our mobile devices should be our main form of connecting with each other, but I do think they're a valuable way to connect as a supplemental form of communication. For example, as a coach, texting is a great way to share a word of encouragement or let a player know you are thinking about them and available to talk if they are facing a challenge. I heard that Mike "Coach K" Krzyzewski started texting his players this year, something he hadn't done before, and he even learned how to use Twitter. If Coach K is willing to use technology to connect with his college athletes, that says a lot. Young athletes today frequently communicate through devices and if coaches and leaders want to connect with them, we have to adapt and contact them in this way. However, it should be in addition to one-on-one conversations where you can look people in the eye and have a heart-to-heart and truly connect. This is where real relationships and connections are developed. Social media and texting simply allow you to develop and strengthen this connection if utilized the right way.

(JG) We live in a world filled with busyness and stress, and when you are going through life at 100 miles per hour, the last thing you want to do is connect with people—but it's the most important thing you can do to build a great team. As a leader, you have to be intentional about connecting with your team and creating ways for team members to connect with each other.

(MS) To truly connect as a team it's also important to connect outside the locker room. We purposefully tried to find opportunities for everyone on the team and in the organization to connect more frequently. For example, throughout the season we held functions that involved the players, coaches, scouts, and support staff and all their families. These moments of connection really made a difference. When your team is connected, you will see and feel it in the way they treat each other. You will see players and staff interacting on many different levels. You will see players' and coaches' respect for one another grow, and the other people within the organization will tear down the proverbial walls in which people and departments typically operate. This is one of the leading indicators that you have a connected team. When you are a truly connected team you will see players participating together in functions outside of the locker room. You will see players getting together for dinners, card games, worship services, golfing, bowling, and just enjoying time together. You will also see players supporting one another's philanthropic endeavors. I'm convinced this level of connectivity is what will take your team or organization to the top.

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Chapter 6: Commitment

(MS) When talking to my team about commitment I like to tell them about the hen and pig and their roles in breakfast. The hen is involved in creating the eggs for breakfast, but the pig is committed. He has to sacrifice everything. To be a great leader, coach, and team member you must be more than involved. You must be committed.

Commitment is something you should spend more time demonstrating than talking about. It shows in your actions, in how you treat people, and how you interact with every member of your team. When you are committed, everyone knows it and your team feels it. Coaches often want their teams to be committed, but there's no way you will get buy-in unless you demonstrate your commitment to them first. They have to know that you are there to serve, teach, and coach. They have to see, hear, and feel your commitment, and know that you want them to be just as successful off the field as they are on the field. You demonstrate this commitment each day with the time you give your team and your willingness to serve them and help them improve. When your team knows you are committed to helping them be their best, they will then be committed to you and give their all for you.

(JG) Your team must feel your commitment, not just hear it. When we hear from a leader, we will learn; but when we feel a leader's commitment, we will be transformed. A team feels a leader's commitment when the leader takes the time to serve them. Jesus washed feet; Martin Luther King marched; Mother Teresa fed the poor and healed the sick. Over the years, I have met many leaders who serve their teams in simple, powerful ways. Many leaders think that as they gain power and responsibility, their teams should serve them more, but great leaders know that their job is to serve their teams. When you serve the team, you help them grow and they help you grow.

You can't serve yourself and your team at the same time. You have to decide whether you are going to serve "me" or "we". You must decide if you are going to be a self-serving "leader" or a true leader who serves others. It's hard to be a servant-leader in today's world. Leaders are under more pressure than ever to perform. With expectations come pressure and stress that drive a leader to survive, which leads to self-preservation rather than serving the team. When leaders become focused on the fruit instead of the root and worry about the outcome instead of the process of developing team members, they may survive in the short run, but they will not thrive in the long run. Self-serving leaders don't leave legacies that change the world for the better. They may win a few championships, make money, and achieve some fame in the short run, but true greatness is achieved when a leader brings out the greatness in others. Great leaders and coaches are great servants. A great coach sacrifices and serves in order to help team members become great. The big questions you must ask yourself each day are what am I doing to serve my team and the people I lead? How can I serve them to help them be the best versions of themselves? How can I demonstrate my commitment to them? Remember, you don't have to be great to serve, but you have to serve to be great.

(MS) As a leader of the team or organization, you are going to be put in many situations in which you need to choose whether you are going to take the fall or pin the blame on someone else. The only

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option for leaders who serve their teams is to take responsibility for everything that happens on the field or in the marketplace. No matter what occurs, never put blame on your players or coaches. If a player blows a coverage or runs the wrong route, you take responsibility because you should have done a better job of preparing them to execute their roles. Take responsibility instead of blaming others in the hope that it will deflect the criticism away from you. Remember, as the leader of the team or organization, the buck stops with you. The team will function more effectively when it has leaders and team members who refuse to blame their teammates.

Of course, there's a time and place to address how we are going to correct the miscue—that is what coaching and leading is all about—but that is not a public setting and it should be done with as much positive reinforcement as possible. As the great NBA coach Chuck Daly would say, shout praise in public and whisper criticism in private.

(JG) The ultimate commitment is sacrifice. To build a great team, your team has to know and feel that you would run into a burning building to save them. They have to know that you are willing to sacrifice yourself for their gain. Great leaders ignore the easy road and build their teams by taking the more difficult path, one that is filled with service and sacrifice. This requires you to lose your ego and love your team. If you love someone you are willing to sacrifice for them. If you love your team you will do whatever it takes to build them up, even if it means tearing yourself down.

Chapter 7: Care

(JG) In Water Isaacson's biography of Steve Jobs, he shared a story about Steve helping his father build a fence when he was a young boy. His father told him he must care about crafting the back of the fence as much as the front. When Steve asked why the back mattered when no one would see how it was crafted, his father said, "But you will know." Steve's father taught him to care more, and years later he went on to create Apple products with such care that they generated feelings of awe, loyalty, and passion among the brand's millions of new customers. It wasn't an accident. Jonathan Ive, the man who designed many iconic Apple products, said, "We believe our customers can sense the care we put into our products." Apple cared about the work they were doing and the products they were creating, and in turn their customers cared about them.

I believe caring is one of the greatest success strategies of all. The greatest organizations on the planet care about the work they do, the products they create, and the services they provide. I've been fortunate to work with many of the most successful companies in the world, and I have discovered they all have a unique way that shows they care— a "caring trademark" that causes them to stand out from their competition.

When I spoke to the Pittsburgh Pirates last year, I asked the players, "Who here believes they can work harder than they currently do?" Every guy on the team raised his hand and every person on every team I have asked since, also raise their hands. The next question naturally is, "If you know you can work harder, then why don't you?" The answer is that to work harder you have to care more. When

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you care more, you give a little more time, a little more effort, a little more energy, and a little more love to the things and people you care about. You may be a good team, but to be a great team you have to care more. Care about the work you do and how it contributes to the team. Care about the people you work with. Care about the mission of your team. Care more about the people you lead. Those who care build great things that others care about.

The Pirates, like many great companies have discovered that it's not the numbers that motivate people. It's the culture, caring, and purpose that drive the numbers. If you want to win, you don't focus on winning. You focus on the culture, people, and process that produce wins. It doesn't matter what signs and messages you have posted on the walls if your leaders and managers don't model it and your team doesn't live and breathe it. You must have leaders who care more about everyone else and everything they do.

To build a winning team it's essential to build a culture of caring. To build a culture of caring you must be a leader who cares. When you care, you will inspire others to care. Find ways to extend yourself to others and serve them. Write a note. Make a call. Go out of your way to serve someone. Go beyond the expected. People know you care when you go out of your way to show them they matter. A smile, an encouraging word, an extra five minutes of time, solving problems, listening to an employee, sacrificing for a friend, and helping a team member through a challenging time can make all the difference. Never underestimate the importance of making time to make someone feel special. Then, when you develop a reputation for caring and others expect more from you, you continue to deliver more than they expect. With each Caring act you are saying, "I am here to love you and serve you," and when this happens, you attract more love and success. Your team will love working with you. People will tell stories at parties and gatherings about you. Authors may even write books about you. Caring is the ultimate team-building strategy. People make it complicated but it's simple:

1. Care about the work you do.
2. Surround yourself with people who care.
3. Show your team you care about them.
4. Build a team that cares about one another.
5. Together show your customers/fans/students/patients that you care about them.

When we make caring a strategy and create a culture of caring, we stand out and create success that lasts.

(MS) I couldn't agree more with Jon. If you want to build a winning team, you must show that you care. It sounds obvious and simple but too often we forget to show we care. We get busy, stressed,

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self-consumed, and don't take the time to let others know we care about them. When you care about someone, you show them that they matter and make them feel important. You show your team that you care by being present when you are with them. You don't look around them or over them. You look right at them and let them know they have your full attention. You take sincere interest in their professional work and personal lives. Having one-on-one personal contact is the most effective way to show people that you care. When you are the leader it is impossible to have these interactions daily, but over time these encounters add up and this lets your team know that you care. When you care about your team, they will give their all to you.

If you want to build a winning team, you must value all team members for who they are, not just what they do. You have to see them as more than uniforms and numbers. You can't look at your team as X's and O's on a whiteboard or costs on a financial spreadsheet. Whether they are being paid as professional athletes, receiving scholarships for playing a college sports, employees in your company, or people who can help you win a high-school championship, you have to remind yourself that under each uniform or business suit is a person who has challenges, personal issues, pain, hurt, and human wants and needs. Every person, no matter how successful, wants to be appreciated, respected, and valued. Everyone wants to feel cared about. Everyone, ultimately, wants to be loved.

Good coaches know X's and O's, but great coaches also know their players. It's your job as a leader to know and love your team members. Even with all the pressure to win and succeed, always remember that it's through relationships and human connections that this happens. Get to know your team and see them as more than numbers, and they will see you as more than a number. They will be loyal to you and work harder for you. They will want to work with you because you care about them. Relationships are the foundation upon which winning teams are built, and all great relationships are based on value, respect, love, trust, and care.

The Big C

It's not one of the 7 C's because it's in a class all by itself. It's the C that brings all the other C's together and transforms principles and ideas into action and ultimately a winning team. It all comes down to the Big C: coaching.

Today there's a lot of talk about leadership in sports, business, health care, and education; however, the concept of coaching is often ignored. It shouldn't be. It's an essential part of a role. Now more than ever, leaders must coach the teams they lead to help them grow and become better leaders. True leaders don't create followers. They create more leaders. This is accomplished through great coaching. Whether it's the executive leadership team of a Fortune 500 company, a sports team, an emergency room team, military team, or a school team you must coach the people you lead to develop, mentor, encourage, and guide them. This not only improves them, it improves you and your relationships, connections, and organization.

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By coaching up and coaching down you create your culture. By coaching with optimism and positivity you become contagious. By coaching your team and mentoring them individually you earn their trust and connect with them. By being consistent, their trust in you is strengthened. By helping them get better through adversity and challenges you show you are committed to their growth and progress. By caring about them, you give everything you have to help your team become all they are meant to be.

A lot of coaches in the sports world read business and leadership books, but we believe that business, education, and non-profit leaders can learn a lot about coaching from the sports world. Billy Graham said one coach will impact more people in a year than most people do in lifetime. If you doubt this, do an informal survey and ask people who made a difference in their lives. Teachers and coaches are up there with family members. We don't often hear people say, "My manager changed my life," or "My CEO changed my life," or "My hospital administrator changed my life." It doesn't have to be this way. If you decide to invest in others and coach them the way great coaches do in sports, you can have an incredible impact. Great coaches succeed not because they are great, but because they bring out the greatness in others. You can utilize the 7 C's to become a Big C and start coaching today.

The Other Big C

We almost didn't include this C in the book because we naturally assumed that everyone knows how important character is to build a great team. After all, you can be the greatest coach on the planet, but if your team lacks character you will fail to reach your potential. Yet, given how many coaches and leaders attempt to build a team by focusing on talent instead of character, we had to talk about it. It's the other Big C because without Character you can't coach a team to be successful, you can't build a great culture, and the other C's don't work very well.

We see it all the time in sports and business. A talented individual with character flaws makes a bad decision that affects the entire team and organization. That's why when building a team, you want to build it with both talent and character. Don't just settle for talent. Talent without character is like a race car with no steering wheel. It looks great from the outside and drives fast, but without something guiding it, a crash is very likely. Talent isn't enough. Talent doesn't last. It will only take you so far. Talent without character is also like an expensive car with no gas. It's useless without the fuel that drives it. Character drives talent toward greatness. If you have people who are humble, hungry, hardworking, honest, dedicated, selfless, loyal, passionate, and accountable they will be the kind of people who develop their talent and make the right decisions to benefit themselves and the team. Character guides and drives your team members to be their best and bring out the best in others.

Do everything you can to develop character. Make it a part of your curriculum! Utilize the Big C to develop the other Big C. Coach to develop Character. But remember and heed this warning: if you have someone who isn't willing to improve, and he's making decisions detrimental to himself and

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the team, then you will have no choice but to let him off the team. If someone is going to crash, don't let him hurt the rest of the team. Do everything you can to prevent the crash in the first place. Just because you let them off the team doesn't mean you can't continue to help them. You can still try to help them become the best versions of themselves. Character doesn't just build great teams. More importantly, it builds great people.