

Hi, this is Wayne Rivers at FBI, where *We Build Better Contractors*.

Don't forget about Boot Camp. Get those high potential people signed up. Charlotte is waiting to hear from you. If you want more information, contact her. There will be a link below. This week, I want to talk about six leadership lessons from Ted Lasso. Who is Ted Lasso?

Well, my wife introduced me. We heard all about it. And my wife said, "Hey, let's try this series, Ted Lasso." And I'm thinking, "Oh, boy. Golly, Moses. What is this? It's going to be some over-saccharine sweet thing." Oh no, it's pretty cool. I actually liked it. So, he's a successful American football coach, high school to college, I can't remember. But he's hired to come over to England and run a struggling football for them, soccer for us, team in the English Premier League. And he was really set up to fail.

There's some conflict between the previous owner of the team and his ex-wife, the current owner of the team. And she's trying to bankrupt him or do some other things. I don't know what she was trying to do, something nefarious. So, she hires this guy who knows nothing about soccer. And basically, he's set up to fail from the very get go, but he doesn't. He is a remarkable success.

So, first thing, thanks to Stan Halliday at Travelers, who put this up on the internal site, and I pulled a little bit from that, so thanks, Stan. And so, what are the lessons that we might learn? What are the leadership lessons from Ted Lasso? Really quite an amazing success story; not Ted Lasso himself, the show. I mean, it started off with little fanfare and it became a phenomenon. So, if you haven't seen it, check it out.

All right, first thing, believe. The first lesson is believe. When he goes into this ... He's going to meet the team for the first time. He puts up a hand lettered sign, giant sign over the doorframe, and it says, "Believe." And he's all about optimism. He's optimistic about himself, his team, his coaches, his organization. He has an abundance mindset. He wasn't going to settle. The team was struggling, but he wasn't going to settle for that because he believed that they could have an abundant future.

And you think about it, don't settle in life. Think about people. If I ever won a big golf tournament or a big tennis tournament or something, my head would be so big you wouldn't be able to stand in the same room with me. But you look at people like Tom Brady and Tiger Woods and Roger Federer or Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic, they've won all kinds of stuff. And instead of letting their heads get big and they think they're some special gift to the world, they go out and they try harder. They learn about, "Okay, I've been doing X, Y, and Z," and they say, "Oh, my nutrition could be better. And this could be better, and I could change this." They never settle. They're always optimistic that as great as they are, they can continue to improve. They believe in themselves.

Second thing is resilience. One of the episodes of Ted Lasso, somebody has been verbally abused by one of the mean players and he says, "You know what? The happiest animal on earth is a goldfish because a goldfish has a 10-second memory. After that, can't remember a thing." In tennis, Andre Agassi was the best. He talked about short-term memory loss. And what he meant was he could hit a ball and hit it off the frame and it goes up 30 rows into the crowd. But the next point is a new point for him. He could reset. He had short-term memory loss that not only did he miss the shot, he looked idiotic by hitting the ball 100 feet in the air. Short-term memory loss. He had that goldfish mindset. And he would dial in and just play the better the next point. He was amazing. So be resilient.

The third thing is define success. Zig Ziglar had a great story about how on any given day, he could beat the greatest archer in the world in a target shooting competition. And he talked about there was a caveat, and that is you would have to blindfold the professional archer. You'd have to spin him around 100 times so he was completely dizzy, and he would give him no verbal advice about where the target was. And his point was, you can't hit a target that you can't see. So, he'd be able to outshoot this archer.

How will you know if you're successful in life? Well, Ted Lasso could measure it by the improvement of his team, the improvement of the attitude of his players, the camaraderie in the locker room, all those things. You need to measure it differently in business. You've got to have your mission, vision, and values. Are you being true to your mission, your vision, and your values at all times. What are your targets? What are your mileposts? What do you want your volume to be? What do you want your gross profit to be? How many new people do you want to hire?

Business lends itself to targets and goals and numbers. Business is eminently quantifiable, even things like morale. Morale is a very nebulous, ever-changing thing. Can you measure morale? Absolutely, you can measure morale. There're so many things you can measure in businesses. Set your goals, set your targets, and they will help you define your success.

Fourth thing, Ted Lasso said, "Doing the right thing is never the wrong thing. Tell the truth." And that is so elemental I think in business. It's quite difficult to do at times because people don't like to hear bad things. They don't like to hear negative truths, if you will. There're no real shortcuts in life. Doing the right thing is sometimes very hard. It doesn't mean it's not the right thing to do, however.

The fifth thing, courage is about being willing to try. Lasso didn't know anything about soccer. His lack of technical knowledge seemed like a great barrier to his success. Turned out not to be a barrier at all because he surrounded himself with people that knew soccer. They knew tactics and techniques and training and all those other things. And so, his lack of technical skills just didn't matter at all. Steve Jobs said something like this before he passed. He said, "It doesn't make sense for business leaders to hire smart people and then tell them what to do. You should hire smart people and let them tell you what to do." Let them inform decisions. Let them help guide the bus. I think Jim Collins said the same thing, "Get the right people on your bus and then let them help you drive the bus." Same thing. Courage is about being willing to try. If you don't have the technical knowledge, surround yourself with people who do, and you'll get there.

And the sixth thing, and I believe in this, happiness is a choice there. There's an old saying about happiness, and actually about courage too, I think: it isn't what happens to you, but how you react to it that matters. And this is attributed to Epictetus, who was a Stoic Greek philosopher sometime in the years 50 to 135 AD. It isn't what happens to you, it's how you react to it that matters. That's courage. All of us are afraid. All of us are afraid we're going to fail in that next presentation, or "This project is too much for me," or, "We've got so many trades on the job site, it's driving me nuts. I don't know how I'm going to manage all these people."

All of us are afraid of failure. We're afraid of looking foolish in the eyes of our peers. But courage is a choice, and happiness is a choice. I believe that firmly. So what do you think? If you've seen Ted Lasso, what are your big takeaways in terms of leadership lessons? If you haven't seen it, hey, might be worth a try.

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