

There are lots of parallels between business and sport

Successful sports teams can offer significant insight into the importance of developing culture, philosophy, recruitment, and retention.

When stepping on the sports pitch, there is an inherent sense of pride and belonging, coupled with an understanding of the team's vision and goals. Each person has clarity on the role they need to play to achieve these goals, understands the philosophy and culture of how the team goes about its business, the ethics, and spirit in which game is to be played.

Wouldn't business be amazing if we created corporate teams that truly and passionately had the vision and mission of the company at heart, working collectively towards goals, supporting each other when things don't quite go to plan, with every member playing a dynamic and pivotal part in planning, review, and reflection to ensure continuous improvement and to feel part of something special. Imagine a workplace where every voice is heard, everyone knows and understands what the expectation is and feels a sense of pride and belonging?

Corporate vision, mission, and values are guiding principles, or a focal point meant to align and unite everyone within an organisation towards a common purpose. Too often however, these are something that the company board spends time creating then files away on a shelf only to be retrieved for the annual report. Vision, mission, and values should be something through which the organisation lives and breathes.

Within sport, the players, members, and volunteers bring the vision and plan to life and are the embodiment of the organisation's identity and philosophy. Their common purpose is developed through the nature of interactions and communications which foster a sense of being 'in it together'. This in turn, breeds a sense of personal responsibility and desire to perform, improve and get results for the team. Business needs to look at how it communicates and invigorates its vision and values to develop culture and philosophy with team members to instil those same behaviours and mindset at work bringing the words on the paper to life.

Recruitment is equally important for business and sport. In business we are often presented with hundreds of applicants with similar qualifications so how do we go about



evaluating each candidate's worth. This is an area where sport does things differently. Within sport, we don't necessarily recruit players with the very best skill levels for our teams if we believe they are capable of being coached to perform at a higher level. Instead, we look more at the person and what they can bring to the team, their strengths, weaknesses, ambitions, and character. When was the last time you asked your interviewees about their personal values and philosophies and compared them to those held by the business or the team?

Within sport, we constantly strive to develop people to perform at the next level but more importantly, we recruit them to fit in with and expand the team – whether that is to bring added knowledge or diversity, a particular skill or experience level or simply an attitude or set of behaviours that would be beneficial to club culture and further reinforce and develop the team's philosophy. Business needs to give greater thought to who they have on the team bus!

Successful sports teams create a player-centred environment. Good coaches seek to understand what skills and knowledge team members need to be able to operate at both the current and the next level and provide a personalised pathway to improvement. Business often sees its role as simply providing training as a tick box exercise to evidence competency as opposed to mapping a personal

development program for each person. If business carefully promotes an effective team culture, offers a suitably ambitious working environment with a sense of camaraderie whilst challenging individuals appropriately, business can increase staff retention ensuring good people will want to remain in company colours.

How can you access the best of sports management for your business? Throughout 2022 Ogilvie Ross are hosting a series of workshops, lunches and seminars bringing together successful sports coaches and managers to share their knowledge and experiences so that Scottish businesses can build highly successful teams. If you would like to be part of these events, email info@ogilvieross.co.uk for dates and venues.

Ogilvie Ross LLP
Performance Consultants

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