

Figure 1. John Wooden's Pyramid of Success.

Leadership lessons from our sporting heroes

By Julie Parker

Leadership is a crucial skill for managers and practice owners to learn. Strong leadership unifies a team and inspires top performance to achieve a worthy goal. There are plenty of examples of strong leadership in business, such as Virgin's Richard Branson, General Electric's Jack Welch and Facebook's Sheryl Sandberg. However, you can discover enormous inspiration from coaches of excellent sporting organisations.

Paul Roos - AFL Coach

After a successful career as an AFL player, Paul Roos coached teams Sydney and then Melbourne. His recently published book, *Here It Is*, lists 25 coaching principles that he formulated over his playing career. Many of the 25 principles are closely related. They serve to flip the traditional grumpy, impossible-to-please coach's mindset to one of inclusion, safety and positivity. Paul Roos's second coaching principle of the 25 is applicable to all organisations, including dental practices: "Coach's attitude will rub off on the players".

In 1999, the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* identified *The Chameleon Effect*, whereby the mannerisms and behaviours of a manager are mimicked by their team. This occurs quite unintentionally and can be caused by our desire to match others in our social environment. Being aware of *The Chameleon Effect* assists managers and leaders to be aware of the attitude they bring to the team. A bad attitude is destructive to team trust, but due to *The Chameleon Effect*, spreads like a virus. However, as Viktor E. Frankl stated in his acclaimed book, *Man's Search for Meaning*, "Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human

About the author

freedoms—to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way.” Attitude is something over which we each have control.

Just as a bad attitude spreads and infects a team, so too a positive attitude can raise a team up to achieve greatness.

**John Wooden -
Basketball Coach**

Renowned American basketball coach, John Wooden, has inspired many through his incredible coaching achievements and sharing his wisdom.

After decades spent identifying the characteristics that define a successful person, Wooden created his *Pyramid of Success* (Figure 1). His Pyramid of Success served as a guide for individual and team excellence. Wooden found that integrity and character play an enormous role in a leader’s ability to garner top performances from those they lead.

Along with his *Pyramid for Success*, John Wooden has shared his 12 Lessons for Success. His first lesson is “Good Values Attract Good People”. Often, dental practices experience the pain of inadequate hiring. There is a lot a practice can do to get the hiring process right (see my previous article in *Australasian Dental Practice*, Sept/Oct 2016 - *How to Hire Great Staff*). Starting the process from aligning your values with the applicants will help ensure you get the right people in your team.

**Sachin Tendulkar -
Cricket Legend**

Superstar cricketer for India, Sachin Tendulkar, lists his 7 Rules of Success:

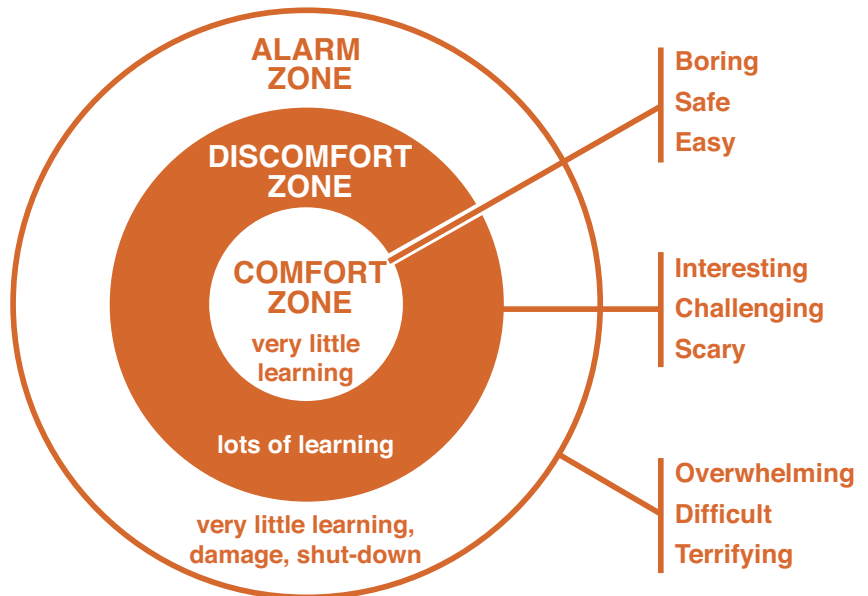
1. Try new things to improve;
2. Be disciplined and think ahead;
3. Don’t cheat, work hard;
4. Solve bigger problems first;
5. Face fear and believe in yourself;
6. Celebrate every success in life; and
7. Struggle, Sacrifice, Success.

Tendulkar’s first rule, “Try new things to improve”, is a useful rule for all leaders. Any readers who follow Tony Robbins will be aware of CANI - Constant And Never-ending Improvement. It is a cornerstone of Robbins’ teachings. CANI is

also derived from the Japanese “Kaizen” which is “kai” meaning change, and “zen” meaning ‘better’.

A leader who seeks success is always finding ways to generate a greater performance from the team. Such a leader knows there is always room for improvement. The leader is no different. The only way

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we improve is to try new things. Trying new things broadens our perspective and forces us to operate from that slightly uncomfortable space where we are not practising in total competence. Although you feel unsure, this “discomfort zone” is the ideal space to work in. It is where you learn, grow and improve (Figure 2).

The journey to successful leadership includes not just your experiences and the wisdom you accumulate, but also looking further afield for lessons that resonate in addressing your current challenges. Enquiring how leaders in other spheres manage their teams and the philosophies they have developed will open your mind to a different way to do things yourself.

Remember that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, but expecting a different result. If you want to improve the results you are getting, seek to find a better way to do what you do.

from 3 to 12 members. Julie successfully cultivated a winning team and a winning business. Her business programs on how to accomplish a dream dental business are gleaned from her wealth of experience, intensive education and an inquisitive business mind. Julie is a Certified Practitioner of Neuro-Linguistic Programming, Time Line Therapy and Hypnotherapy.

Julie Parker Practice Success offers a subscription based program that educates all dental staff in the building and managing of their practices. Members receive monthly audio CD’s and workbooks that lead them along the path to personal and team success. All team members, including the dentists, receive Certificates of Completion each month for submission for non-clinical CPD points and inclusion on resumes. Memberships are available for \$395 per month. For more info, see www.julieparkerpracticesuccess.com.au.