

PHL|HP Consulting Group

Building & Sustaining High Performing Organizations



A Message From Dr. Philip Levy, Founder & President

Baseball or Soccer? Lessons From The World Cup

Recently, I read an interesting column written by David Brooks in which he questioned whether life was more like soccer than baseball. It made me think whether successful businesses are more like soccer teams than like baseball teams.

Both appear to be team sports, but baseball is really an accumulation of individual activities and accomplishments, while soccer is more like a chess game in which the key to success is having all players interact in such a coordinated way that they are controlling the space through well orchestrated and practiced formations. Soccer is truly a collective team game in which every player must carefully follow the task assigned to them in order to score and defend, resulting in victory.

So what does this have to do with business? Everything! Our success and satisfaction is interdependent and a product of our commitment to a well orchestrated team effort rather than an accumulation of individual actions and achievements.

It all begins with whom we associate. As leaders, the most important decisions that we make are whom we choose to have on our team, the strategies that we develop, and the corporate culture that clearly states that we are committed to our shared success rather than individual accomplishments.

Innovation is dependent upon an environment where trust is built, risk taking is encouraged, and success is shared. We must rid ourselves of the disease of “me” and “envy”. We are only successful when we realize that the game of business at its highest form is like soccer where patience and the ability to stay with the game plan are critical to the desired outcome.

- Phil Levy

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