

# Successes & Strategies

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## What We Can Learn From The New England Patriots

### *How to go 16-0 in your business*

Whether you realize it or not, the parallels between a successful football team and a successful business are a plenty. First, football is a business as much as it is a game nowadays. Everyone knows who the successful teams are because they win – consistently. They have a lot of competition whom they beat on a regular basis with superior talent, strategy and determination. What makes the Pats success that much more extraordinary is the presence of a salary cap. Unlike the Red Sox who have the resources to outspend virtually every other team (except the Yankees), the Pats are constrained in that they cannot spend any more than their competition can on players. The NFL is set up to promote competition and parity so that each team has an equal opportunity to win. So why do the Pats succeed where others don't? How does their success apply to business? Read on for my top 4 reasons.

Reason #1 – An Emphasis on Leadership – Throughout the Pat's organization, leaders are given the utmost value and importance. From the Krafts to Belichick to Brady to Bruschi, the team is full of leaders, and in that lies a secret for business. As the owner it is generally accepted that you would be considered a leader. What will really add to your success is the presence of others on your team who will lead in their roles. When your key team members take ownership of their roles, they will naturally lead others. Leadership can be coached to a degree by you, but it will be much easier if you recruit and hire based on leadership qualities and reward team members consistently for showing leadership.

Reason #2 – Have an Overall Core Philosophy – When you think about the Pats and try to describe them in just a few words, what words do you come up with? For me, words like toughness, leadership, innovation, team, and selflessness come to mind. These represent core values and how the Pats define themselves as an organization. Your business need not have the same core principles but your business should stand for some basic ideals that anyone who encounters your business can easily see. The ideals and values that you hold as most important should be how you define your business to all. Business strategies and ideas that do not align with this

core philosophy should be discarded. When the Pats draft or enter the free agent market, they go after those players that align best with who they are. When you know what your business stands for, decision making is much easier.

Reason #3 – Don't Be Afraid to Open It Up – The Pats throw more than they run. When you consider that there are three things that can occur when you pass (completion, incompleteness and interception) and two of those things are bad, this is quite remarkable. What the Pats know about their team is that you cannot reap rewards without taking on risk, as long as you manage that risk. In the Pats passing scheme, the risk is largely measured by emphasizing shorter to intermediate routes and taking what the defense gives them. When measuring the risk of the occasional interception versus the average yards per passing play gained, the Pats formula for success starts with a risk-based open attack. Playing it safe in business is a sure way to assure mediocrity. My experience working with business owners for nearly 25 years consistently shows me that smart risk takers almost always win.

Reason #4 – Measure For Success – In my opinion, the brilliance of Bill Belichick lies in his understanding of what strategies against a given team were most successful in the past, tweaking the parts that didn't work as well and rolling out a game plan based on a full understanding of the team's past performance to put it in the best position it can be in to win the next game. He has figured out that the minimization of mistakes in the passing game clearly shows that pass first, run second is an effective strategy for winning. It helps to have a great leader (Tom Brady) executing the strategy, but the point is still that the statistics bear out the strategy. Better put, the statistics pointed to the strategy in the first place. Measurement is vital to a business success. Discovering which measurements are clear indicators of present and future gains is vital. Every business should have 4 or 5 things it measures continuously that are signs of success. On time delivery, margin by product, sales pipeline, customer incoming call count are just some examples. Discover yours and you can find the path to success.

The Pats are the best team in NFL history and if you look closely you can learn from their success.