



In Business, Play to Win

By Susan Schilke; February 5, 2018

As the NFL season wraps up and winter sports take the stage in the Olympics, high-performing athletic teams are in the spotlight. Is your company a high-performing team? How about you?

Are you an ideal team player for your company?

Pat Lencioni explores the concept in his new book, [The Ideal Team Player: How to Recognize and Cultivate the Three Essential Virtues](#). In this business parable, Lencioni outlines the three traits that must be combined to earn the title of ITP:

Humble – not concerned about status or personal recognition; considering success collective rather than individual.

Hungry – hard-working, always looking to do more, and ready to take on additional responsibility.

People Smart – intuitive, empathetic, and effective at dealing with others.

Humble Team Players want to serve the team. They are not out for all the credit or seeking attention, and they willingly share the accolades. It's not that they have a lack of belief in their abilities, rather they have an innate awareness that success is about the whole team – not just themselves.

Hungry Team Players go above and beyond and are determined to get things done. They bring energy and passion for the work and possess a sense of responsibility and self-motivation. They are always ready to take on the next challenge.

Smart Team Players have common sense about people and manage their relationships positively. They understand group dynamics, have good intuition about others, and deal with their fellow team members with empathy.

We all want to be on a team filled with hard-working, unassuming, positive and supportive people.

The place to start on your journey to this kind of team is with yourself. Lencioni says to qualify as an Ideal Team Player you can't be significantly deficient in any category.

Which of these three qualities – humbly, hungry, (people) smart - provides the best opportunity for your continued growth as a team player? This was the first question I asked my CEO and Key Executive members last month in conversations about this book. You likely don't have equal doses of the three. I like attention and recognition for my accomplishments and need to work to make sure I stay humble. Some of you may struggle with being motivated and committed to getting things done. Others may misread their fellow team members, or not realize how some of their comments or actions impact people.

Make a commitment to explore how you can become a better team player. I highly recommend reading [The Ideal Team Player](#) – it is an entertaining story and a book full of helpful insights. Then give some thought to how to bring these concepts to your team.

While we all bring our individual strengths to our role, we know at the end of the day, success is all about the team. As we cheer on Team USA in the Winter Olympics in the evenings, bring your best team spirit to your company, too. That way everyone wins!