

The Five Principles of Being the Best

Part 1

1. Quality – Values, People and Practice
2. Teamwork
3. Learning and Training
4. Resilience
5. Building Depth and Flexibility

Part 2

The Five Principles of Staying the Best

1. Continue with the Core principles and Keep Coaching
2. Redefine the Challenge
3. Refresh the Team
4. Avoid Recycling
5. Face Your Foes.

Extract from book **Staying at the Top by Ric Charlsworth** (coached the Australian Women's hockey team to number one world ranking in 1993. where they stayed for 8 years and won gold in two Olympics)

Some quotes from his book

Part One

- Most of us are capable of doing something well.
- It is not sufficient or desirable to focus narrowly on getting to the top without considering what will keep you there.
- Cooperation and teamwork are part of any successful enterprise.
- Athletes learn most by doing, and with good coaching their experience becomes one of continuous learning and growth.
- Coaching and managing starts and finishes with preparing the athletes or staff as thoroughly as possible for the rigors of competition.
- Thoroughness ensures attention to detail, a pursuit of excellence and an obsession with getting things right.
- Every organisation, team, club or group should take the time to clarify and identify its core values.
- Do we know enough about those we select to become part of our organisation?

- Learning is not something that occurs only at University or College before we start work.
- As a coach or manager you should look for the raw materials and the will to be good.
- The important work occurs in preparation and training, and then in providing support and feedback once in the contest.
- It is difficult and challenging to be a good team; you have to work at it.
- One's personal aims need not be different from those of the team.
- Our values underpin the correct actions – never expect something for nothing, share the load, work hard, never give in.
- The strength of a team lies within the capacity of its individuals, and without their co operation in each, part of their business efficiency
- Good preparation and awareness of contingencies assist in the co operative process.
- Managers, who allow their employees to review, report and restructure their own areas of responsibility show trust.
- We are what we continually do; excellence is not an act, it is a habit.
- The best athletes and workers are keen to learn more about themselves, their sport or work, its nuances, their teammates and their opponents.
- Many of us go through our lives without ever exploring our capacities, be they physical or mental.
- Usually one learns most when one risks failing, when one risks going beyond what is comfortable.
- The challenge to improve stimulates investigation, analysis, evaluation and innovation.
- Too many people confuse “simple” with “easy” – the very best can make things look simple because of their competence, but we should remember that many hours of practice lie behind the simplicity.
- Mistakes can make us stronger and more determined, or they can leave us disillusioned and defeated.
- The capacity to put things in perspective and move on is crucial to our life instinct.
- I never expect to lose any game, but I understand that it is always a possibility.
- Can we learn and bounce back or do we lose confidence and trust in our ability to do it right next time.
- The ability to identify the problems and provide solutions gives us a way forward, a reason to continue and hope for better.

- The best preparation for sudden changes is to practice adapting to change.
- Every business should have people who can do one another's jobs.

Part two

- The secret of success in sport and in other endeavors is not to be distracted by the expectations and ambitions of others and to be able to stay on the task.
- Two of the keys to staying at the top are an ability to keep an eye on what it is that made us good in the first place, and the need for coaches and managers to keep coaching and take nothing for granted.
- Good organisations should train and prepare for future management.
- It is crucial that training sessions be interesting and fun.
- Once at the top, an organisation becomes a target for all opponents.
- Ensuring depth and flexibility is not something you should start to look at when you've made it.
- Never make the mistake of thinking the senior staff or players don't require attention.
- In the workplace it is often those who are comfortable and feel able to do their jobs without too much hassle who need to be challenged with new tasks, new demands and new requests.
- Young pretenders, managed well, lift the attitude, tone and output of any organisation, for they challenge orthodoxy and embrace and introduce change and new ideas almost unconsciously.
- By trying to build a "leaderful" group in which interaction and curiosity and involvement are expected at every level, your organisation or team can be greatly refreshed.
- You should always aim to improve a team, whether winning or losing.
- Changes need not be huge or dramatic. Rather they should be part of a continuously evolving scene.
- The best organizations encourage difference and enthusiastic contributions to the program.
- It is never anyone's turn to win the gold medal; it must be earned.
- Even with the best preparation, the best players and the best strategy, things can go wrong.
- Losses and setbacks are useful reminders of what is required to be the best.
- The optimal state of doubt is one in which the opposition is respected, but not

- feared.
- Those who practice excellence, prepare thoroughly, learn from every source, work co-operatively and are resilient and flexible will be able to manage doubt and fear.
 - We all need to know where we are heading – just don't expect and fine detail when it comes to how things will work out.
 - What I think is true is that your preparation and thoroughness in building your team or business give you the best chance of success.
 - When managing people it is important to know your own perspectives and foibles as well as to try to understand the point of view of others.

CM

August 28, 2008

Burnside notebook /Coaching comments/ Five principles/ Ric C