

An excerpt from
[What It Takes To Be Number One](#)
by Vince Lombardi & Vince Lombardi Jr.

Running a football team is no different than running a business. Results are the bottom line. What running any organization comes down to is the consequences that are brought about by your leadership. The absence of positive results renders your leadership a failure. Bookstores are full of books regarding the debate about organizational structure; hierarchical or flat, centralized or decentralized and everything in between. Yet it's not structure, but results, that make a leader. Leadership isn't a position; it's a process that produces the desired results. If you don't produce results, if you don't execute—you're not a leader.

Leaders get paid for results, not for being right. Results come from mistakes—being wrong—and leaders must possess Coach Lombardi's mental toughness to handle mistakes, take accountability for them, and quickly abandon efforts that fail to produce results.

If you are right all the time you aren't taking enough risks. Results require a willingness to act, even if you are unsure of what lies ahead. And, almost always, you will be unsure. Only through risk and action can you take your organization to the next level.

Results, specific and measurable, come from having a clear vision, defining what improvement and adaptation looks like and having a beginning and an end in mind. Results come from knowing what you are achieving today and having a clear, specific strategy for closing the gap between today's reality and your vision for tomorrow.

Perhaps you don't want to be a "Lombardi" type of leader; challenging, demanding. Maybe you don't think you can be that kind of a leader. That's OK, as long as you produce results with whatever approach you feel comfortable with. But keep in mind that ultimately, it's not whether people like you or approve of you as a leader; it's whether they produce for you.

In a training camp speech to the Packer players, my father told them, "I'm here because we win, you're here because we win. When we lose, we're gone." Good career advice for anyone in a leadership role.

The ring the Green Bay Packers wear for defeating the Oakland Raiders in Super Bowl II has three diamonds across the face. They signify the three World Championships in a row the Packers won, with Super Bowl II being the third. On one side of the ring are the words "Run To Win." The phrase is a biblical verse Lombardi gave his players during the weeks leading up to the Super Bowl II. He quoted St. Paul, "Do you know that all who run in a race, all indeed run; but only one receives the prize. So run to win."

"Some of us will do our jobs well and some will not, but we will all be judged on one thing: the result."