

12 Leadership Lessons from the World Class All Blacks

Greatness is the ability to consistently deliver peak performance regardless of opponent, occasion or what happened the week before. - Steve Hansen and Ritchie McCaw views as quoted in NZ Herald

The All Blacks are the first team ever to have won the Rugby World Cup three times including back to back titles.

And to achieve this, they have shown nothing short of high performance, excellence in teamwork, composure, self and team knowledge, and a grounded self-belief throughout the 2015 Rugby World Cup.

On the emotional front, who can resist the following – the spiritual power of the [haka](#) as it throws out a challenge to the opponents while acknowledging and drawing on the energies of all those giants who have worn the jersey before them; the indelible joy on the faces of the players, team management and all the supporters when an unexpected try has been scored or when a practiced move has come off in actual play; the natural show of group hugs and flying leaps of the ecstatic players as they land in a delirious mound.

But it is not just about Rugby. There are some powerful leadership, team and life lessons we learn from this world-class team with a win ratio percentage of 90 plus.

Here are 12 lessons:

- 1 **Diversity** – they are effectively able to harness the diversity of skill set and personalities in their team to make their *‘star performers’ into a ‘star team.’*
- 2 **Composure** – they keep their composure and play above the line even when under such pressure as they were with the South Africans in the semi-finals and the Australians in the finals.
- 3 **Lack of ego** – humility and yet an understated belief and quiet confidence marks the leadership - be it Ritchie McCaw, the captain, Steve Hansen, the coach or any of the senior players and management.
- 4 **Respectful** – they are always respectful in their dealings with others including their opponents e.g. in the semi-final win against the South African Springboks acknowledging their physical strength, might and courage as a team.
- 5 **Grit and hard work** – they show grit and courage and put in the work to retain their place. They refine and improve on what is not working to come out on top.
- 6 **Technical skills** – the All Blacks have built up a great depth of experience, technical skills and strategic game acumen to know what it takes to out-manoeuvre their opponents, despite any momentum changes against them e.g. in the finals, when the Australians got within four points and the All Blacks were a man down in the sin bin.
- 7 **Inspirational** – through their humility, respectful behavior, excellence and down to earth attitude, they are able to inspire us. The masses of young boys (and girls!) not only aspire to be an All Blacks but feel encouraged to work hard, back themselves and be the best they can be.
- 8 **Inclusivity** – the All Blacks is not a “club” for just one group. There is meritocracy and anyone with the right skills and attitude has a chance. Dan

Carter and Dane Coles have often reflected on their small town upbringing and never really thinking that their dream could ever become a reality.

- 9 **Succession planning** – experienced players and newbies – all get given a chance at expressing their talent. The younger, newer players are given the opportunity to play and test out their skills in significant games as part of their development.
- 10 **Integrity and moral code** – the players have their individual aspirations and contracts but they present as a solid team and play for the greater good of the team and country. There is no match fixing here.
- 11 **Community involvement** – they are still part of the larger New Zealand community and reach out and give back as and when possible. They are accessible and remain their home town heroes.
- 12 **Focused on results** – they do whatever all is required to achieve the results and they **DELIVER**.

Go the All Blacks – "The Defenders and back to back winners of the Webb Ellis Cup!"

For a small country like New Zealand, the All Blacks and Rugby represents so much more than a game.

They embody both our individual inspiration and a sense of national pride. The [All Blacks](#) and their brand are such a core part of the Kiwi psyche and for all the above reasons and more, we love them so much!

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