



**A BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESS:
LESSONS FROM 22 BACK-TO-BACK
CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Rusty Komori

Most people would agree that winning one championship is difficult—and winning a repeat or three-peat is the very definition of challenging.

I was a tennis coach for 22 years and led my teams to win 22 consecutive state tennis championships. Since hanging up the racket, I've become an executive coach, translating lessons from the courts to business offices and boardrooms.

How did I do it? Achieving and sustaining success doesn't happen by chance; it requires a proven blueprint. Whether you're in the sports world or the business world, there are six keys for peak performance:

KEY #1: YOUR PHYSICAL GAME

How good are you at physically doing your job? If you're leading a business team, how good are you at getting your team to perform at their best?

Let me be clear: good teams will demonstrate peak performance from time to time, but great teams seem to demonstrate peak performance *all* the time.

When I was head coach, I didn't want my players to practice until they got it right. I wanted them to practice until they couldn't get it wrong. You don't work on something until you barely get it. You work on something until you own it, and it becomes a part of you. It becomes something that you do, and it's part of your identity.

KEY #2: YOUR MENTAL GAME

How well do you focus and concentrate on your job and completing tasks? Noise and distractions tend to trip people up when they have an average mental focus. However, leaders and teams with exceptional mental focus can block out virtually everything to complete the task at hand.

I know you've heard the phrase "mental toughness" before, but what exactly does it mean? Mental toughness is the ability to create and maintain the right kind of internal mindset, regardless of the circumstances. The brain controls the body, so controlling your thoughts and having the right internal climate gives you the opportunity for peak performance.

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KEY #3: YOUR EMOTIONAL GAME

Are you able to control your emotions? Are you aware of the emotions of others? Some people make irrational decisions based on how they feel at that moment. Yet the greatest leaders always make decisions based on reason, not emotion.

Coaching your team to be aware of when people become emotional—and taking the time to recover from that experience—allows them to control themselves and the situation in a positive way.

The bottom line: You always need to control the situation instead of letting the situation control you.

KEY #4: YOUR STRATEGIC GAME

How good are you at figuring out the most effective strategies to achieve your goals? I've seen many teams work hard, but they adopt the wrong plan and fail. In contrast, leaders and teams that work smart set the foundation for peak performance.

To work smart, you consistently need to have the right strategies. Remember, direction is more important than speed. If you're headed in the right direction, you'll achieve your goal eventually.

KEY #5: YOUR TACTICAL GAME

Once you have the right strategy, how well do you identify the tactics that will help you execute it successfully?

Think of strategy as the general framework needed to accomplish your goal and tactics as the little details that help get you there. Some leaders are good at figuring out the right strategies but still suffer defeats because they employ the wrong tactics.

The greatest leaders and teams focus on the details. They connect all the dots when determining which strategies and tactics will lead to victory. They pivot, adjust their plans, and incorporate individual team members' talents to put the team in the best position for success.

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KEY #6: YOUR SOCIAL GAME

Do you create the right atmosphere for your team, even as you deal with outside forces beyond your control?

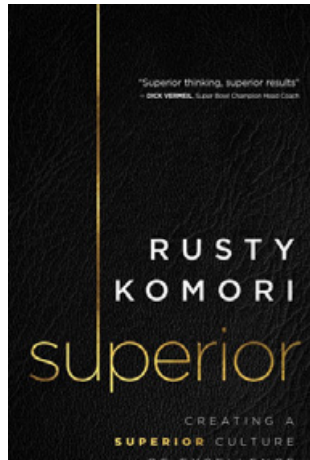
As head coach, I always prioritized creating a safe and friendly environment for my players, their families, and even the opposing team. It was gratifying to see so many students and parents socializing with one another in such a positive, welcoming environment.

Creating a supportive environment is an important part of peak performance. Even if you have the other five keys, if your team doesn't feel right where they're at, they won't perform to their full potential.

In the words of inspirational speaker Alexander Den Heijer, **"When a flower doesn't bloom, you fix the environment in which it grows, not the flower."** 📖



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rusty Komori is a motivational speaker, leadership consultant, and tennis professional based in Honolulu, Hawaii. From 1994 through 2015, he was the head tennis coach at Punahou School, where his boys' varsity teams won an unprecedented twenty-two consecutive state championships, a national record in all sports that still stands.

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