



FOREWARD: PETE CARROLL

What's wrong with this guy? Now that he's made the team, he seems to be in a slump. He's lost his aggressiveness, and he's playing soft. Is he hurt?

From 1990 through 1994 in countless late night meetings at the New York Jets football complex, there were many such questions asked that led to both theoretical and practical conversations between Bob Reese and myself. Consistency is what a coach looks for most in his players. Bob calls this consistency enduring success. Regardless of what you call it, we both share an insatiable curiosity about why certain athletes perform well consistently and why others don't ever seem to reach their potential even though they may have more talent.

Because of this shared interest, when I took over as Head Coach of the Jets in 1994, I sent Bob on a mission. He was charged with seeing what was going on in the world of performance enhancement that could improve the consistency of play for the Jets. He did a great job of sifting through the bold claims of motivational gurus that would have had us walking on hot coals or broken glass and pseudo-scientific inventors of elaborate light and sound machines to find information, techniques, and professionals that we could use to improve our players individual and team performance – and consistency.

While on his assignment, Bob found Diana McNab, a sport psychology consultant we eventually hired. He gained entry for my staff to the West Point Performance Enhancement Center, where they witnessed sophisticated and efficient methods of delivering mental skills training. He also introduced us to the curriculum of Lou Tice and The Pacific Institute, which gave me insight into why it is so difficult for many people to change.

Judging from the content of this book, Bob has never abandoned his mission. His research has helped him define what he calls the 5 Essential Mental Skills to achieve success and maintain consistency. I use these skills daily for my own performance and to improve the performance of my players. What I find helpful is the way he has broken down and explained the skills so that anyone can learn them. I also appreciate how he encourages the integration of the skills for maximum results.

There are several areas that Reese explains that are very important to me. For example, I now know that mental toughness is a skill that can be taught and not an inherited trait. Particularly helpful is how Bob has explained the role of emotion and energy and their role in enhanced performance. This is something I always knew, but until now I had trouble explaining it to others.

Finally, what impresses me most is the way he brings this to the real world. Bob teaches what sports coaches have known all along, that the mental skills necessary to be successful in sport are the same mental skill necessary to be successful in life. This book is a must read for anyone who wants to be better and stay better at what they do.

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