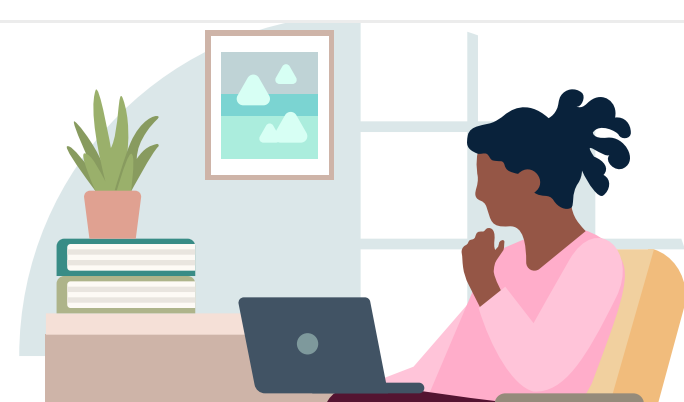


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# Five Leadership Lessons from Our Lionesses Euro Championship Success

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Lionesses gate crashing England coach Sarina Wiegman's Press Conference

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The Lionesses did it; **Football Finally Came Home** yesterday. Congratulations to the England Women’s national football team; Our pride and appreciation go out to the team, not just to the 11 women on the field, but to everyone that contributed to that collective success—also, big congratulations to every woman out there with a dream. This success shows what is achievable despite the female professionals’ daily challenges.

So, what turned this team into a Europe-beating squad?

Beside the teams hard work and immense talent, Sarina Wiegman, the England coach, brought a form of **effective leadership** to the table that propelled the team to a 20-match unbeaten streak and, ultimately, the European Championship.

With that in mind, let's explore the leadership lessons gleaned from her team stewardship during this tournament.

**1. Leadership presence** – Sarina commands respect; her demeanour is often understated but effective; Her leadership presence shines through in her media interviews and her interactions with her team. You can tell she commands the respect of her team and those around her.

**Question** - What type of leadership presence do you exude? Are you respected, feared, or just tolerated?

**2. A clear vision** – She showed no doubt that the England team were ready to write history. Sarina could sell that vision to others, so much so that the team bought into it wholeheartedly, giving them strength when they needed it most.

**Question** - Do you have a vision? Are you infectious about it?

**3. Bold decisions & creativity** – Sarina made her decisions on the squad’s development without sentiments and fear of consequences. It showed a level of assuredness. The fear of failure sometimes stifles creativity and innovation, stopping the exploration of opportunities. Nine members of Sarina’s Euros selection had never played in a major tournament. However, Sarina realised something many leaders don’t, that not having done something before doesn’t preclude potential greatness.

**Question** - Does your worry about what might happen if you get something wrong stop you from taking risks? Do you depend on trusted hands only? Or can you spot potential and give it a chance to blossom?

**5. Create the right team culture and ensure certainty at all levels** – When asked about Sarina’s influence, the players’ answer’s focused on the culture she created within the team. Sarina was said to have discussions with all the players before a match, including substitutes, making them aware of what she expected their role to be in the game, giving each player a sense of purpose and a view of the big picture.

**Question** - What culture do you create as a leader? Is it one of certainty and purpose? Or do you contribute to a culture of uncertainty and discontent?

**6. Focus on developing strengths** – Sarina wasn’t blind to the strengths and weaknesses of the teams her side faced. However, she was known to focus on improving her side’s strengths and mitigating weaknesses. Many leaders focus on their competitors to the detriment of building on existing internal competencies. It is a delicate balancing act.

**Question** - Do you have the right balance between competitor analysis and building internal competencies? Are you focused on being better than the rest or being the best you can be?

There are many more leadership lessons to be learned from Sarina Wiegman squads’ success and I do not doubt that these will be analysed by many in the coming weeks and months. What other lessons from this success can you translate into the corporate world? Are you able to bring any of these to play on your leadership journey?

Suppose a picture could paint a thousand words, the one above sums up a modern success story. The story of a team in touch with its purpose, excelling in a culture where you are not afraid to celebrate with your coach, even if it means gate crashing a live media interview. Go Lionesses!

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The Lionesses did it. Congratulations to them and every woman out there that has a dream.

What can we take away from this success as leaders? See five leadership takeaways. Have you got any to add?

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