

Lessons in Leadership

How the LA Kings won the Stanley Cup

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Road to The Playoffs

- *Dec. 22, 2011* – Only one win above .500 at the 33-game mark, after firing Terry Murray, the Kings announced Darryl Sutter would become head coach.



- *Apr. 12, 2012* – Under Sutter:
 - The Kings go 25-13-11 in 49 regular-season games
 - Finish 8th in the Western Conference (the final seed in the playoff bracket)

Road to the Cup

- Eliminate #1 seed,  in 1st round (4 to 1)
- Eliminate #2 seed,  in 2nd round (4 to 0)
- Eliminate #3 seed,  in 3rd round (4 to 1)
- Los Angeles in the Stanley Cup final for just the 2nd time in franchise history
- *June 11, 2012* - LA Kings defeat NJ Devils 6-1 to win the best of seven final in six games 
- Won the 1st 3 games of every series – 1st team in Stanley cup playoff history to do that

What Can We Learn?

Head
Coach
Role = Project
Manager
Role

7 Game
Series



7 Lessons
you can apply
in your world

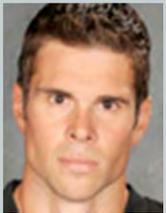
Game 1: Bring Your “A” Game

Dustin Penner - Forward



“His intensity is an intensity that I haven’t encountered yet from a coaching perspective. He’s always on. It’s game time for him all the time. It bleeds out to the rest of the team – the way he talks to us, the way he coaches the game, the way he teaches it, from practices to during the game, to the intermissions.”

Willie Mitchell - Defenceman



“You see the intensity in him, his passion, it rubs off on everybody. Like a CEO in any company, if he has passion it rubs off on everybody.”

Bring Your “A” Game: How?

- Ensure you’re committed to the effort
- Ensure you can be successful
- Ask yourself:
 - What strengths do you bring?
 - Which of your weaknesses may hinder you?
 - How will you counteract your weaknesses?

Game 2: Create a Work-Focused Environment

Dean Lombardi
- LA General Manager



“Athletes have changed. But I think deep down, they still want to be pushed and they still want to be the best they can be. We put so much around them now, it’s easy to take the easy way. He doesn’t allow that.”

Game 2: Create a Work-Focused Environment

“It was a long road... obviously Darryl came in and I felt like everybody felt a little more accountable for their actions in day to day play, practice, everything. But at the end of the day, it’s got to come from the room and guys have to make a decision to work, and I think we did that.”



- Jonathan Quick - Goalie

Create a Work-Focused Environment: How?

- Communicate the project vision & purpose
- Set clear expectations of individual and team performance
- Quickly address poor performance
- “Walk the talk”

Game 3: Help your People Improve

“He’s just instilling confidence in me. There’s going to be mistakes, there’s going to be pucks turned over, and he lets you hear it, but he also lets you hear the good stuff, too.



We’ve had a really good open dialogue, and I’ve been able to consistently have a good effort day in and day out. As you get through the season, you get a little bit more in shape, you get a little bit more comfortable, and you start to realize what you can get away with out there and what you can’t.”

- Justin Williams – Right Winger

Game 3: Help your People Improve

Dustin Brown – Right Wing &
Kings captain



“He’s an honest guy. If you’re playing like crap, he’s going to tell you. If you’re playing good, he’ll pat you on the back. “Anyone can respect that. That’s why players play for him.”

Jarret Stoll – Centre



“He’ll tap you on the arm and he’ll say, ‘How are you doing today? Everything okay? How’s your family?’ “He cares. He really cares.”

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Help your People Improve: How?

- Understand their strengths & weaknesses
- Support training
- Assign tasks appropriately
- Observe, listen, ask questions
- Provide honest feedback

Game 4: Create a Team Identity

Why did you decide to make Darryl the Head Coach?

“Just look at his track record, what he’s done with very different types of teams... whether a good team in Chicago, building a team in San Jose... and then taking an older team, probably not a very good team to the Stanley Cup finals.

The biggest thing that Darryl gives you is that whenever you stand for something you have an identity. I think that’s probably the number one thing, as a coach, which he can give your team.”

- Dean Lombardi, General Manager



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Game 4: Create a Team Identity

Darryl Sutter

“That’s the best thing about these guys: they bought in to getting better. Use your skill set and ... do it together. You can’t do it as individuals”.



Rob Scuderi - Defenseman

“It’s an indescribable feeling. To be part of a team that does the right things, and plays for each other.”

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Create a Team Identity: How?

- Get your team involved
- Define clear roles & responsibilities
 - Job descriptions
 - RACI chart
(Responsible, Accountable, Consult, Inform)
- Co-locate the team
- Ensure people are executing their roles
- Deal with non-performers or “not a good fit”

Game 5: Adapt your Approach



General Manager Dean Lombardi recalls a point about 20 games into Sutter's work with the Kings:

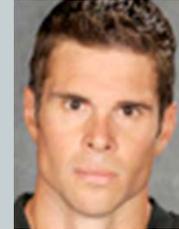
“He blamed himself. He said he should have seen this sooner. He showed me what he was going to do on the board, the changes he was going to make systematically. It was just really, a guy with his experience, he's beating himself up: ‘This is my fault. It should have never got this far. We've got to make this adjustment.’ I found it amazing he was blaming himself.”

Adapt Your Approach: How?

- Be flexible!
- Have different styles/approaches in your repertoire
- Don't be afraid to make personnel changes
- Ensure you've got support from above

Game 6: Maintain Focus

Willie Mitchell - Defenceman



"Coach says it best, you get nothing for winning three. The last one is always the toughest one."

Justin Williams – Right Winger



"He knows the right time to be relaxed. He knows the right time when the team is feeling good about themselves and he brings us down a little bit. He just makes sure and pushes the buttons to make sure we're ready."

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Maintain Focus - How?

- Build frequent milestones in your plan
- Celebrate successes along the way
- Resolve issues quickly
- Deal with setbacks
- Recognize your team needs a “break”

Game 7: Let your Team Take the Glory

Darryl Sutter

“It’s not about me or the staff. It’s about everybody. That’s what’s important. Everybody plays hard and has fun, what more do you want.”



Let your Team Take the Glory: How?

- Give your team credit
 - Speak “We” vs. “I”
 - Tell people about your team successes
 - Thank your team publicly
 - “They make me look great!”
- Look for opportunities to give your people exposure outside the team
- You always take the blame

7 Leadership Takeaways

1. Bring Your “A” Game
2. Create a Work-Focused Environment
3. Help Your People Improve
4. Create a Team Identity
5. Adapt Your Approach
6. Maintain Focus
7. Let Your Team Take the Glory

Questions?



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