

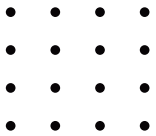
5 Leadership Lessons From a Relay Race



Building Championship Teams



> Introduction



In business, as in relay racing, the difference between good and great isn't just individual talent—it's how that talent works together. The most successful organizations don't just recruit stars; they build championship teams through strategic positioning, flawless exchanges, and systematic practices that maximize collective performance.



LESSON 1: STRATEGIC TEAM POSITIONING

The Championship Principle: Place team members where their natural strengths create maximum impact.

In championship relay teams, runners aren't positioned randomly. The explosive starter, steady accelerator, technical maintainer, and pressure-performing closer each bring specific strengths to their position.

Business Application:

- Identify each team member's "natural lane" (initiating, accelerating, maintaining, or closing)
- Align responsibilities with innate capabilities rather than just experience
- Create deliberate "position profiles" for critical roles

Research shows teams are up to 43% more productive when members are strategically positioned according to their natural strengths. (Harvard Business Review, 2024)

COMPLEMENTARY RESOURCE: For a deeper exploration of optimal team positioning, download our free guide "The Four Positions of Excellence" at www.alphadiscoverygroup.com/relayready.



LESSON 2: MASTER THE EXCHANGE ZONES

The Championship Principle: Excellence in transitions often matters more than excellence in steady-state performance.

Championship relay teams win or lose in the exchange zones—those critical 20 meters where the baton transfers from one runner to the next.

Business Application:

- Map your critical "exchange zones" where work transfers between individuals or departments
- Create specific communication protocols for handoffs
- Implement visibility systems that track work through transitions
- Practice exchanges under pressure, not just during ideal conditions

Organizations with optimized handoff protocols achieve 20-30% greater operational efficiency even when individual department performance remains constant. (MIT Organizational Studies, 2023)



LESSON 3: RUN YOUR LEG WITH EXCELLENCE

The Championship Principle: The most selfless contribution is focusing intensely on your specific responsibilities.

When the baton is in your hand, championship runners aren't thinking about other legs—they're completely focused on executing their role flawlessly.

Business Application:

- Develop technical mastery in your functional area
- Create personal practices that optimize energy for key performance moments
- Build pre-performance routines for high-stakes situations
- Maintain strategic awareness while executing specific responsibilities

McKinsey research (2022) demonstrates that teams practicing "focused excellence" outperform those attempting broad competency by 18% in high-stakes deliverables.



LESSON 4: DELIBERATE PRACTICE DRIVES PERFORMANCE

The Championship Principle: Championship performance is never accidental—it's the product of systematic practice far beyond "good enough."

Elite relay teams don't just practice more—they practice differently, with purpose, pressure, and precision.

Business Application:

- Break complex business processes into discrete components for focused improvement
- Practice under simulated pressure conditions that mirror real-world challenges
- Deliberately practice recovery from failures, not just perfect execution
- Create measurement systems that track practice quality, not just completion

A 2022 study published in the Journal of Organizational Behavior found teams implementing "Deliberate Practice Protocols" see 34% improvement among mid-level performers within three months.

COMPLEMENTARY RESOURCE: Assess your team's current performance across all championship components with our "Championship Team Assessment" at www.alphadiscoverygroup.com/relayready.

05

LESSON 5: BUILD SYSTEMATIC RESILIENCE

The Championship Principle: Recovery isn't about motivation—it's a systematic capability developed before setbacks occur.

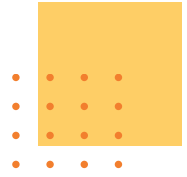
Championship teams don't just bounce back through willpower—they have structured recovery protocols that transform setbacks into growth.

Business Application:

- Develop specific recovery cycles for different types of setbacks
- Build operational redundancies for critical functions
- Create emotional resilience practices that maintain decision quality under pressure
- Implement learning extraction mechanisms that convert failures into institutional knowledge

According to the Corporate Executive Board (2024), organizations with structured "Recovery Frameworks" bounce back 64% faster from major setbacks than those using ad-hoc approaches.

> **READY TO BUILD A CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM?**



01



COMPLETE THE CHAMPIONSHIP ASSESSMENT

Identify which formula components need immediate attention

02



SCHEDULE YOUR COMPLIMENTARY 30-MINUTE FORMULA CONSULTATION

Receive customized insights to identify your highest-leverage improvement opportunities

03



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About Yolanda

Yolanda Harper, author of "Relay Ready: Turning Individual Excellence into Championship Teams," combines collegiate championship relay experience with over two decades of business leadership. Through keynotes, workshops, and strategic advisory services, Yolanda helps organizations identify and eliminate the performance gaps that prevent talented individuals from achieving championship results.

Based on the book "Relay Ready: Turning Individual Excellence into Championship Teams" by Yolanda Harper

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