

## Relating Management to Football- "Pulling a Favre"

Adaptation is crucial in business. People must adapt their skill sets and personality traits in order to blend with their work cultures. Unfortunately, adaptation can only get you so far, and when the going gets tough, people's natural instincts and behaviors get going. Brett Favre is the perfect example: The man has one of the longest-running careers in the National Football League, or at least he did until the National Football Conference championship game.

Quarterbacks are like star employees, and coaches are like managers. Coaches make decisions that affect the entire team, and even the outcome of the game. One bad decision (or "pulling a Favre") can result in a dropped ball that can cost the championship. Although losing the chance to go to the Super Bowl seems tragic, imagine losing your company because a manager dropped the ball.

The fact of the matter is that despite people's best attempts to adapt, they will always revert back to their natural behaviors when under pressure. Poor Favre unfortunately reverted back to throwing short passes in the final minutes of one of the biggest games of his career. Just like Favre's coach, some managers might not understand their employees, and this means that managers might have unrealistic expectations of their star performers. If the star performer feels stressed or is under too much pressure, he could revert back to making poor decisions that cost the company countless dollars.

Assessments offer some objectivity for managers who are trying to predict how an employee will behave in a crucial situation. Assessments for both managers and employees provide detailed information about each individual's learned and natural behaviors. Managers can use the results from the assessments to better understand the natural makeup of their employees, and to better predict how people will react in certain situations. The coach should have known that the play he called was not Favre's strongest, and that it would not be a realistic way to win the game. Managers should understand their employees well enough to know where and how each employee can succeed.

Leaders must be able to understand their employees, as well as themselves. If a leader is unaware of his own inability to make clear decisions during high-stress situations, the entire group could fail. Favre's coach led him to believe that making that pass was a good idea, but it turned into a failure for the entire team. True leadership emerges when a person is aware of his own shortcomings and is willing to improve for the benefit of others. Knowing how a person operates makes it easier to understand and counteract his reactions.

Assessments won't change the fact that Favre throws short passes when he gets nervous, but they will enable leaders and managers to better understand themselves and their employees. Don't let your managers pull a Favre. Equip them with the tools necessary to understand and communicate effectively with their teams so that they can win in the Super Bowl of the business world.