

# VOL. 2 OVERVIEW

When I began writing *Management Secrets of the New England Patriots*, I never imagined it might expand to two volumes, let alone a trilogy of more than 1,000 pages. But I have found it impossible to contain the team's inspiring characters, insightful personal philosophies and organizational principles, impressive achievements and instructive lessons within one or even two books without shortchanging you, the reader.

Mark Twain famously apologized that "I didn't have time to write a short letter, so I wrote a long one." I make no such apology. The Patriots are both entertaining and worthy of our extended attention. Patriots players' passion derives from a mindset and lifestyle that can teach us to live more satisfying, fulfilling lives. And Patriots players' professional pride provides a blueprint for designing organizations that harness human hopes to conquer collective challenges. Organizations thrive by dividing group tasks into individual roles and filling each role with an individual whose passionate pursuit of self-actualization aligns with the role he is asked to fulfill. The Patriots have taught me many truths, and I know their story will enlighten and empower you too. I could convey these concepts in fewer pages, but even Mark Twain—who valued brevity—wrote *Huckleberry Finn*, not *Cliff Notes: Huckleberry Finn*. The original, though longer, is a page-turner. For this reason, I share with you the Patriots' story, not just another management textbook.

In Volume 1, I described the astonishing accomplishments of the 2001-2003 Patriots and began sharing their "secrets." Volume 2 is heavy on "secrets," delving deeply into Training, Planning, Collaborating and Motivating. Though these topics sound toast dry, they are essential to any team's success. Volume 3 will break down several more "how" topics (Communicating, Strategizing, etc.) and survey the 2004 and 2005 seasons, including the team's triumph in Super Bowl XXXIX.

*Management Secrets* analyzes the best football team of the early 21<sup>st</sup> Century and extracts team-building and leadership principles from an organization as outstanding as any Fortune 500 firm. I decided to write *Management Secrets* not only to celebrate my favorite team but also because Bill Belichick's Patriots can teach organizations everywhere to become "high performance work organizations" whose employees—like Patriots players, coaches and executives—are happier, more engaged with their work, more creative and more productive. As globalization places increasing competitive stress on businesses and workers, who wouldn't want to bolster both labor productivity and job satisfaction? The Patriots' three Super Bowl victories in four seasons demonstrate the benefits of building businesses according to high performance work organization principles.

Such lessons are valuable beyond sports and business. When an organization's mission is as essential as that of the FBI or CIA or FEMA, for example, a dedicated, selfless, mission-driven culture should exist. Leaders should find it easy

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to fire up employees to perform their jobs with pride and passion because the organization's mission is intrinsically important. Instead, these agencies have been plagued by poor morale and bureaucratic turf wars:

“The huge failure of the [CIA] to... uncover the 9/11 plot indicates an agency that is demoralized and lacks a unifying *esprit de corps*... Bureaucratic leaders will never get top-level performance from public employees if they rely on individual self-interest... A true leader must... develop a culture of cooperation, trust and pride [where] people believe in the agency, in their work and in their political leadership.”<sup>56</sup>

It's perhaps a shame Bill Belichick coached the 2001 New England Patriots to Super Bowl victory rather than run the CIA. It's perhaps a shame he coached the 2002 Patriots rather than serve as Enron CEO. It's perhaps a shame he led the 2003 Patriots to a second world championship rather than run NASA's Space Shuttle program. It's perhaps a shame he led the 2004 Patriots to a third Vince Lombardi Trophy rather than oversee a fair election as Ohio's Secretary of State. And it's perhaps a shame he is coaching the 2005 Patriots rather than running FEMA.

I hope current and future leaders of such organizations will learn from this most successful football program. The world desperately needs to clone Bill Belichick's leadership skills and the professionalism and team spirit of his assistants and players.