

# Key Ingredients to a Winning Team

By  
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*This is a synopsis of Gerard Houllier's lecture at the National Soccer Coaches Convention in January 2008. Houllier is currently the Director of the French FA's player development system. He has coached Paris St-Germain, Liverpool United, Olympique Lyonnais, as well as assisting the 1998 World Cup winning French national Team.*

1. **Goals-** Have a vision! A club must have a philosophy or a vision that is shared by everyone. People/teams perish without a vision. Where are we going? How are we going to get there? You can't answer these questions without a vision. Goals help you achieve your vision.
2. **Work-** to succeed you must work hard. You must **consistently** work hard. It can't be a sometimes thing, it must be a daily thing. There must be a **real will** to progress.
3. **Respect-** Your attitude determines everything! Good teams have a respect for the game, their coaches, their teammates, and their support staff. They also respect themselves. This quality ensures a focused, reliable, serious and committed player/team. **Give your Best!** When you do this you are bound to succeed.
4. **Enjoyment-** You will achieve better results if you've created a good atmosphere. Have a good sense of humor. Smile and show enthusiasm! You must find a proper balance between enjoyment and discipline. Stay positive. Be wary of "professional de-motivators".
5. **Positivity-** Don't dwell on peoples flaws, instead focus on and develop peoples qualities. As an organization don't focus on the things you don't have, but maximize the things that you do.
6. **Adaptability-** Don't become unsettled by change. Everything changes, good teams embrace it. Change of play, change of systems, etc. You can't stand still, you must progress.
7. **Competitiveness-** The will to respond to adversity. The will to win is as important as the skill to win. All teams/people will face set-backs, you must respond to them. Too many people complain and dwell on problems, when they should be focused on looking for solutions.
8. **Communication-** Listen. Show human qualities. Empathy is needed from the leader. Explain why? Unfair treatment works against motivation. Blame the action, not the author. Instead of telling players what not to do, explain what you'd like them to do. For example, instead of saying "don't take risks" say "play

safe”. Instead of saying you’re playing “too deep”; ask your team to “push up”. Doing this will instill a more positive outlook.

9. **Leadership**- Show the way, reduce the uncertainty, and inspire! In any organization there must be a boss. People don’t follow those that don’t know where they are going. The leader must be professional and accountable. The image that he or she projects translates to the team.

10. **Team Pride**- Teams that win are proud of their shirt. Create a culture of team and club this will reinforce a collective trust.

- Respect
- Be a Winner
- Be a Pro
- Think Team First

In sports you are not sure to win, but if you don’t work as a team you are sure to fail. Stick Together! Don’t ignore your subs or role players. These players often determine the atmosphere of the club.

11. **Confidence**- All successful teams have a self-confidence and collective team confidence. People have a craving desire to feel appreciated. Say thank you or offer a compliment. It will enhance the players’ drive to achieve when they feel it is appreciated.

12. **Show Humility**- Always remain humble in your job. It’s not about you, but the collective group. Never lose that perspective.