

Quiet strength:
leadership,
perseverance, will,
determination, and
positivity

Life



Book Review

There is no shortage of leadership and motivational books on the market; however, many argue that Quiet Strength by Tony Dungy is one of the best books of this genre. Dungy notes that he was always against writing a book even though he had been approached numerous times and presented with the potential endeavor. In 2007 the Indianapolis Colts won the super bowl led by their quiet, faithful, and authoritative leader and head coach, Tony Dungy. After this victory, Dungy gave a heartfelt postgame speech that sent ripples throughout the entire country. He was soon flooded with emails, messages, and letters commending him on what he had said and praising him for how he has helped people all across the country, even though he might not have intended for it. Upon receiving all these notes, Dungy realized it was finally time to write a book, but not for the reason people might think. A two-time super bowl champion, as a player and a coach, Dungy wanted to reach people through his book, using his recent success as a platform to spread messages of positivity, hope, and joy to all. I chose to read this book in order to learn and grow as a leader myself. Dungy's incredible leadership abilities and traits go hand in hand with what we have learned in class and of the dozens of lessons I took from this book, there are a few that really stood out to me and translated directly to what we have learned and preached in our class throughout the course of the year.

The first lesson I took from this book is to make the best of absolutely every situation that you are confronted with. There is one major instance in Dungy's life that he elaborates on and truly shows how excellent of a leader

he is. As we've learned in class, a leader is supposed to be the head of a group and be someone that people can turn to in times of adversity. If a leader is nervous, uncomfortable, or scared, then these feelings seamlessly transfer over to the people he is leading. Leaders naturally have followers in every case, so if a leader breaks down, so to will the people he leads. During the 2005-2006 season with the Colts, Dungy was woken up in the middle of the night to the sound of his phone ringing. Upon answering, Dungy was stunned to receive arguably the worst news a parent could ever receive. Dungy's son had committed suicide at the young age of 18. News like this can cripple a family, tear it apart, and ruin the family for years and years to come. Dungy, always the voice of reason, mourned at first, but soon took a different stance. Rather than wallow in self-pity and question why something like this would happen to him, Dungy put a positive spin on the situation. He spoke of how James blessed his family for 18 years and noted all the positivity and joy he brought their family. Most people, including leaders, don't have the courage or the temperance to state something as powerful as what Dungy said. He led by example and guided his family through the toughest times. He recognized that his wife and other children were hurting dearly, just as he was, but as the amazing leader he is, he didn't let those emotions be seen for long. Instead, he stood up, collected himself, and moved forward in life focusing on how amazing James was for the 18 years he was alive. Dungy led by example, a classic trait of a leader. He didn't ask anyone to feel the same way he did or act the same way he was acting. He understood how much his family was hurting and rather than folding like a cheap piece of paper, Dungy stood his ground and moved forward all while

place his unwavering trust in God. Soon his family returned back to their old ways and the grieving ended much sooner than in most cases. When a leader stands firm and acts a certain way, his followers will act as he does. Dungy led his family through their darkest times and came out as a stronger family than ever before even though they had just lost one of their own. On top of this, Dungy remained coaching the Colts through the remainder of the season, something few people would have the mind to do. Leading by example is one of the most discussed topics in our class. As a leader you must showcase to others your strength, mental fortitude, and perseverance when tough times come your way. Only then will those who you lead follow in your footsteps. In this case, Dungy's family responded to how he held himself and soon enough they were stronger than ever before.

The second lesson this book provided me with encompasses three main aspects that make someone a transformational leader. A transformational leader is someone who leads by expressing a vision that persuades followers to work hard to achieve the goals envisioned. The leader's vision provides the follower with motivation for hard work that is self-rewarding. The three aspects this book gave me that truly showcase how Dungy is a transformational leader are high standards solve just about anything, you don't have to yell or bring others down to help them learn to be successful, and you will be successful only when you learn how to make those around you successful. High standards are often looked down on due to how lofty and ambitious they can be, but Dungy showed that high standards truly are a key to success. Dungy always held his players accountable for everything they did whether that is on the field or off the field. One of his main

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expectations and goals was for every one of his players not only to be great players, but to also be exceptional men off the field. Dungy himself was exactly this. Even though he would work seven days a week with minimal sleep, he still found time for charitable work with his church as well as spending time with his family and being an incredible father. This was Dungy's vision for all his players and he always held them to this standard. When there is a high standard set by the leader for everyone else to follow, those being led have no choice but to respond and become what their leader wants them to be. Dungy was transforming his players into good men not just good players. The second aspect of being a transformational leader is to not degrade the people you lead. While Dungy held all his players accountable, he would almost never yell at them when they slipped up. He took each mistake and helped his players learn from what they had done wrong. In his mind, there is no reason to yell at people when they have made a mistake because yelling doesn't solve a problem, it only adds to it; however, Dungy, being the authoritative leader he is wouldn't tolerate mistakes made by players. He had a vision and all his players had to curtail to this vision. It was Dungy's way or the highway, but if one of his players seemed as if they were wavering from the straight line, he would bring them back. He helped some of the most well known athletes in the world become better men through compassion, kindness, and a firm hand, all excellent traits of a leader. The final aspect of you will be successful only when you learn how to make those around you successful, truly defines a leader. No leader in the world will succeed if their followers are failing. Dungy knew this and in turn one of his main focuses was to make every single one of the

people he was leading successful. Dungy is a kind-hearted man who will do anything for anyone in need therefore, this was easy for him and it came naturally. He wanted the best for everyone he led and he got the best out of all of them. That is why he was such a successful head coach and leader of men.

Going into this book, I assumed I would be reading all about football. While I technically was, this book really isn't a football book, just as Dungy has stated. This book is a book of leadership, perseverance, will, determination, and positivity. Tony dungy truly is one of the greatest men on this planet and I am a better man just from reading his book. He inspires all his readers to go out and to be successful leaders. His messages of positivity and transformational leadership skills go hand in hand with this class. In short, it almost feels like we have been describing Tony Dungy everyday in class. This book is undeniably an amazing read and I would recommend it to anybody and everybody.