

How to Win in both Football and Business

Many times we use sports in the business world to support, inspire, and show examples of how to improve. With the start of a new football season upon us, I find this time of year very exciting! I live in a town that is all about SEC college football, boating, and tailgating. There is something special about cruising up the Tennessee River on a beautiful fall day, seeing [Neyland Stadium](#), and tying up next to it with the [Vol Navy](#). What an experience!

So when I saw a *Sports Illustrated* article titled "[The Sabanization of College Football](#)," I was intrigued. [Alabama](#) is [Tennessee](#)'s biggest and longest successful rival, and they have won two championships since [Nick Saban](#)



has been there. Also, UT head coach [Derek Dooley](#) worked under Saban at [LSU](#) in the early 2000's. The article discusses the success of Saban's program, and that is exactly what I have found to be a major key to success for businesses.

What it basically boils down to is that the focus should be all about the process of what they do rather than the end result. Saban focuses on the process that he requires of the players: how they train, how they call the plays, and even how they prepare for school work. The article says it best: "Instead of thinking about the scoreboard, think about dominating the man on the opposite side of the line of scrimmage. Instead of thinking about a conference title, think about finishing a ninth rep in the weight room. Instead of thinking about graduating, think about writing a great paper for Intro to Psych."

How much can we learn from thinking like that? In my experience, we could learn a lot, especially from how they pick their people. In both sports and business, the one with the best talent will be the winner in the long run. Saban has three key sets of criteria for each player: character / attitude / intelligence. He then breaks it down by position to things like height / weight / speed. Having specific criteria like this keeps your emotions out of it and keeps you from getting off track in making decisions.

What processes and criteria do you use to determine how your company gets work done and what you look for to bring in new talent? We have processes at [Efficiency](#), but we still need to work on some areas. I need to push harder for this and inspect what I expect.

I hope you get to enjoy some great fall days with your friends and experience some big game excitement with your favorite team. Go Vols!