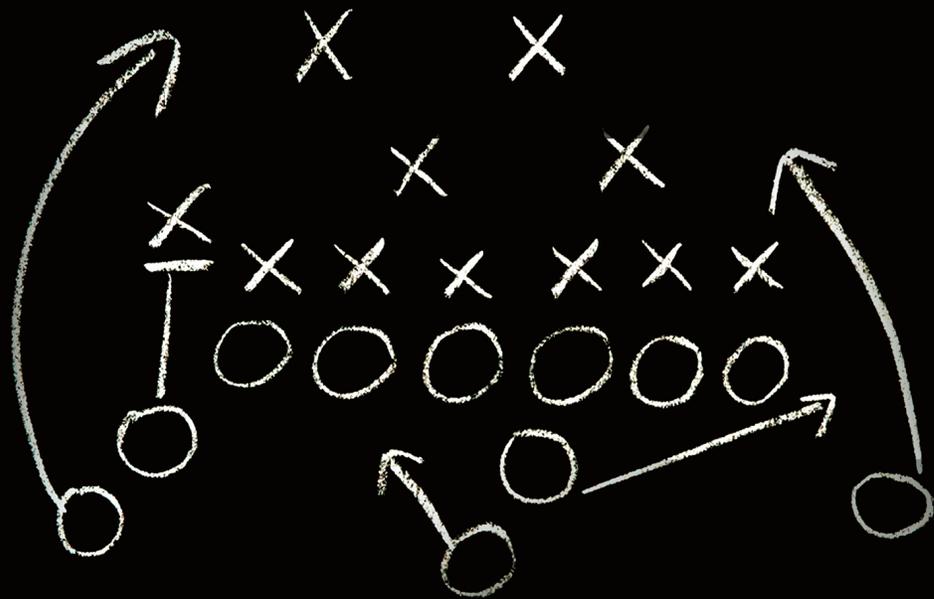


MOVE THE BALL

HOW THE GAME OF AMERICAN FOOTBALL
CAN HELP YOU ACHIEVE YOUR LIFE GOALS



Jennifer A. Garrett

MOVE THE BALL

HOW THE GAME OF AMERICAN FOOTBALL
CAN HELP YOU ACHIEVE YOUR LIFE GOALS

Jennifer A. Garrett

Copyrighted material

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 2: THE PRE-GAME SHOW	4
CHAPTER 3: ARE YOU <i>WITH ME</i> ?	17
CHAPTER 4: DROP THE DEAD WEIGHT	31
CHAPTER 5: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO WIN?	38
CHAPTER 6: WHAT’S IN YOUR PLAYBOOK?	44
CHAPTER 7: CHECK YOUR EGO BOTH ON AND OFF THE FIELD.....	50
CHAPTER 8: MOVE THE BALL.....	60
CHAPTER 9: GET THE NEXT FIRST DOWN.....	67
CHAPTER 10: RECOGNIZE THE BLITZ	72
CHAPTER 11: BEWARE OF THE BLINDSIDE	87
CHAPTER 12: THINK BEFORE YOU PUNT	92
CHAPTER 13: PLAY THE FULL “60”	98
CHAPTER 14: KEEP YOUR HEAD IN THE GAME	106
CHAPTER 15: TRAIN LIKE AN ATHLETE—HAVE MAD PRIDE.	114
CHAPTER 16: MENTAL TOUGHNESS.....	116
CHAPTER 17: AMBITION WITH ATTITUDE.....	118
CHAPTER 18: DETERMINED BALANCE	121
CHAPTER 19: PRACTICE WITH PURPOSE	126
CHAPTER 20: RELENTLESSNESS TO REBOUND.....	134

Move the Ball:
How the Game of American Football Can Help You Achieve Your Life Goals

End Zone Publishing

Copyright © 2018 Jennifer A. Garrett
All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system without the written permission of the author, except where permitted by law.

ISBN: 0988786923
ISBN-13: 9780988786929
Library of Congress Control Number: 2012956204
CreateSpace, North Charleston, South Carolina

Second Edition

Printed in the USA

Move the Ball

CHAPTER 21: IMPROVEMENT FOCUSED137
CHAPTER 22: DEDICATION TO A HEALTHY DIET141
CHAPTER 23: ENERGY THAT ENERGIZES143
CHAPTER 24: PLAY LIKE A FREE AGENT.....148
CHAPTER 25: DON'T JUST BE A PLAYER153
CHAPTER 26: IT'S GAME TIME: GET FIRED UP!.....161

MOVE THE BALL

**HOW THE GAME OF AMERICAN FOOTBALL
CAN HELP YOU ACHIEVE YOUR LIFE GOALS**

Jennifer A. Garrett

Foreword

Jennifer Garrett is a leader, pure and simple. When I met Jennifer, it was clear right away that Jennifer was different: she possessed that rare quality of communicating through her actions as well as her words. While many of her personal skills were obvious—excellent listening skills, persistent drive, infectious humor and enthusiasm, clarity of thought and expectations, incisive intelligence—how those skills were woven together to create a great leader was not.

But Jennifer was more than just a good leader (I know, because while I watched her out-perform her peers at work, I also heard hilarious running narratives about her children, learned that she liked to play as hard as she worked, and marveled at her as she completed a law degree—and passed the bar exam—in that same time period). In short, Jennifer had a joy for life, and she seemed, more than most people, to invest her best efforts in her most important priorities. What I was not aware of was this: Jennifer had a secret.

What I didn't know was that Jennifer was a serious sports fan, but *not* your everyday, run-of-the-mill sports fan. When Jennifer went to a football game, she didn't just watch the game; she used the game as a window into her life. She was as much a translator as a spectator of the game—she was able to see in the struggles and victories on the field the life lessons needed for victory in her life. So when Jennifer screamed at the umpire or referee, got hoarse for yelling the fight songs, painted her face, did her

Move the Ball

dance, ate the barbeque, or cried in disappointment, it was not just about the game. Rather, it was the clear reinforcement of those life lessons—displayed to her in bold relief on the field—that enabled her to enjoy the game to the fullest, and yet become strengthened and empowered at the same time.

So Jennifer's joy for life was a natural consequence of the links she observed between talent and performance, and her ability to perform at a consistently high level flowed directly from the connections she was able to draw between effort and character. Her leadership skill was constantly being renewed and refined as she applied the lessons she learned to teamwork and winning.

So this book is Jennifer's great gift. It presents an amazing, yet very simple approach to winning in life. By applying the insights she has gained to her own life, she set herself apart, successfully leading difficult, high-pressure teams to victory under stressful circumstances. But she did so without losing herself—winning in life as well as in the game. That's why this book is so important. It's important to listen to Jennifer, because Jennifer has a message to anyone seeking to lead a life of achievement as well as balance. The insights contained in this book present leadership as an ever-present art that can be observed and appreciated, and they prove that the mantle of leadership can be worn by anyone.

By the way, if Jennifer is correct in arguing that the more one comes to love sports, the more meaning one can bring to one's life, then that's worth this book alone.

—James E. Braggs,
Quality Black Belt Expert

Testimonials

“A girl writing about football?? As a former player at the highest level, the realization of what the game means from a different perspective than the normal ‘guys that played the game’ is both refreshing and powerful. The breaking down of the virtues and values that were instilled in me by playing the game are clearly put forward by Jennifer’s deep appreciation for the game. Whether you are a pro, just played some high school ball or are just a fan of the game, this book will give you a deeper appreciation for why the game is so much more than just a concussion factory. And for those of you that don’t get the game or were never a fan, it is a very insightful read on why you may want to give the sport a second look.”

- Brent Novoselsky, Former NFL Tight End

“Ms. Garrett’s book gives great detail about the game of football, and what it can do for you off the field in a business setting or life. This book can open your eyes to what people are missing about the game of football and the beauty behind the game. This is a must read!!!”

- Coach Nick Toledo, Professional football coach

“Jennifer Garrett is one of those rare people who can energize an entire room of people. Her presentations are fast-paced and engaging. Her book motivates readers to apply simple principles to make our lives better. She’s inspired me to set my goals higher and take action to reach those goals.”

- Faith Wylie, Newspaper Publisher, Oologah Lake Leader

Move the Ball

“Frankly, I know next to nothing about football, but I know a good book when I read it, and this is a very good book. Jennifer Garrett’s advice could help anyone take their life to the next level with her incisive and inspirational advice.”

- William Bernhardt, Best-selling author of over 40 books and ten million copies sold worldwide

Preface

The game of American football is like none other. Many people consider it not only the best sport in America, but also the best sport in the world. From players’ Cinderella stories to teams’ spectacular comeback victories, football affects people’s lives in a constructive way.

This sport teaches us about life; like football, life is a game of strategy and teamwork. The principles football teaches both on and off the field are the same ones we need to achieve our personal and career goals. I learned this at an early age and these doctrines have been a driving force in why I have been able to accomplish my goals while facing a myriad of challenges.

My story is not unique. Everyone has obstacles to achieving greatness. Everyone handles those barriers in different ways. Some people find ways to overcome them. Others make excuses and never realize their dreams.

People often tell me that they’re amazed at my accomplishments. They share how they wish they had done one thing or another in their lives. I respond by telling them that they can. It’s never too late to get into the end zone and score. I have shared with these individuals the principles highlighted within this book and how they will help them get what they want in life. At the end of our conversations, they have been inspired to move forward toward their goals. I want this book to do the same for you.

Chapter 3:

Are You With Me?

“Football is an honest game. It’s true to life. It’s a game about sharing. Football is a team game. So is life.”—Joe Namath

Baseball is America’s favorite pastime, but football is America’s passion.

When the players step onto the football field, energy consumes the stadium. No matter whom the game is between, vast amounts of hype and trash-talking have occurred in the weeks leading up to the event.

The moment of truth has come. While no one can predict the winner, everyone hopes that his or her team will come out on top. Regardless of the outcome, one fundamental principle always holds true: *Dedicated teamwork amongst the players is necessary to achieve the win.*

A talented quarterback cannot win by himself alone—and neither can you.

The Canadian Football League (CFL) differs from American football in a few ways. One important distinction is that Canadian teams only have three attempts to get a first down. This design drives the need for a passing offense. While the NFL has more liberty to run short passes, its paradigm has shifted. The NFL is now a strong passing league. College football is no different. The spread offense now dominates at schools once known for having a running-game mentality.

Move the Ball

2011 NFL Season

- ✓ NFL teams averaged an all-time high of 229.7 yards per game
- ✓ NFL average passer ratings, number of attempts, and yards-per-attempt at all-time highs
- ✓ NFL teams fielded ten 4,000-yard passers (double from 2010)
- ✓ Drew Brees, Tom Brady, and Matt Stafford surpassed 5,000-yard mark
- ✓ The NFL had more 1,000-yard receivers (19) than 1,000-yard rushers (15)

When you're in a passing league, you need at least one top-notch receiver to make those remarkable plays. Life requires a strong passing game as well. You cannot move the ball without other players. Dangerous quarterback-wide receiver tandems are necessary to win.

While this principle is understood across the NFL, in 2012, three teams were proactive and used their franchise tag on wide receivers before free agency opened. The Eagles kept DeSean Jackson, the Patriots retained Wes Welker, and the Chiefs held onto Dwayne Bowe. These franchises took extra measures to secure their strong quarterback-receiver combos. These pairs are an essential element to the teams' playbooks.

During the mid-1980s, the most potent offensive duo was arguably the San Francisco 49ers' Joe Montana and Jerry Rice. During their eight seasons playing together, Montana and Rice won two Super Bowl championships, and made seven trips to the postseason. Rice was the benchmark for wide receivers to come.

While the Montana-Rice days are ones many football fans will never forget, plenty of other quarterback-wide receiver tandems have also excited football fans.

Two great pairs of the past were Dallas Cowboys' Troy Aikman and Michael Irvin, and the Indianapolis Colts' Peyton Manning and Marvin Harrison.

Are You With Me?

Jerry Rice NFL Stats

- ✓ 1985 NFL Rookie of the Year
- ✓ During second NFL season, led NFL with 1,570 receiving yards and 15 TDs
- ✓ 1,549 career receptions for 22,895 yards and 208 career TDs
- ✓ Currently holds NFL records in career receptions, receiving yards, and receiving touchdowns

And there were more. Jay Cutler and Brandon Marshall were together for three years in Denver (2006–2008). They both made their first Pro Bowl trips in their last season together. They have once again reunited in Chicago for the 2012 season, and the Bears offense has been solid.

In 2010, the Eagles' Michael Vick and DeSean Jackson were unquestionably one of the NFL's most explosive tandems, averaging 23.5 yards per pass, a league best.

Typically pass rushers can get to the quarterback in four seconds. With

Vick's instincts and ease of mobility, he extends the play past this window, allowing Jackson more time to get free down the field. These two continue to make dangerous plays. They use each other's strengths to execute the Eagle's playbook. In your life, you'll also need strong receivers to help you get into the end zone.

The Patriots' Tom Brady and Wes Welker are equally as dangerous. Brady is comfortable in the pocket, because he can read the coverage and knows what to do before the ball is snapped. Welker is incredibly physical and explosive, and he led the 2011 NFL season in receptions. This duo is unstoppable; they're aligned, and they can use the team's coverage to connect.

Each of these pairs is unique. They bring different skills and strengths to the game, but they share one common theme: They're committed to winning and play as a team to win.

Winning your life's goals requires the same mentality.

Move the Ball

However, a strong quarterback and a game-changing receiver alone do not win football games. Nine other players on the offense must also be focused on moving the ball forward.

I often preach to my friends and colleagues that on any given day, any team can win. It's very true. The Green Bay Packers played the Indianapolis Colts in the fifth week of the 2012 football season. The Colts were the underdog. By halftime, the Packers were winning 21-3. When the game ended, the Colts had won 30-27. The Colts' head coach Chuck Pagano wasn't on the field that day. He watched the game from his hospital room as he battled leukemia. The players *wanted* this win, and they never gave up. The team won this game for Chuck.

Football taught me the importance of teamwork. As a kid I watched the Bears come back from twenty-point deficits. I learned valuable lessons from those games.

Lesson 1: *You must play the entire game.*

Lesson 2: *You must be committed.*

Lesson 3: *You need a team to win.*

In my career and personal life, I accomplished my goals because of others. Life is a team sport. It's not a one-man game.

My son, Anfernee, played football at Forest Hills Northern (FHN) High School in Grand Rapids, Michigan. I went to my first football open house at the end of his sophomore year. I didn't know what to expect. When I left that evening, I was fired up and ready for the next football season to start.

I mingled with other parents until 6:30 p.m., when head coach Jeff Rapelje requested all parents to take a seat in the auditorium for some announcements. Coach Rap started the meeting

Are You With Me?

by praising the Husky football team and his talented coaching staff.

Coach Rap explained his goal for the upcoming football season. He wanted the Huskies to make it to the Michigan State High School Football Championships. This was a lofty goal for a team that had finished the prior season with a 5-4 record—and this had been their best record since 2002. In fact, in 2007, the Huskies had gone winless.

While a state championship didn't appear promising, I was pleased with the stretch goal.

Coach was setting the bar high, and he was focused on pushing this football team. He was striving for greatness.

Making the championships did not matter to me. What invigorated me was the coach's commitment to challenging these boys. He wanted to stretch them beyond their comfort zones. While I was excited, I was not prepared for what he said next.

Four words came out of his mouth: *Are you with me?*

Hard work would be required to achieve Coach Rap's goal. So would sacrifice.

Similar to other football teams, the Huskies conditioned through the off-season. During the summer, the boys trained in sweltering heat over the summer, including intense two-a-day practices in August. With Michigan's humidity, the risk of injury was severe.

According to a study coauthored by University of Georgia climatologist Andrew Grundstein, deaths of high school football players in the US nearly tripled between 1994 and 2009, as compared to the preceding fifteen-year period. On average, nearly three football players died each year in practice sessions due to overheating, or hyperthermia.

Move the Ball

Coach Rap concluded by saying that he would know who was *with him* by observing who sacrificed to be there. If the Huskies were going to win, the extended team—the family, coaches, and friends—needed to commit as well.

When focusing on your goals, it is important for you to know who is in your support network and who is not. Ask your friends and family this: *Are you with me?*

If they are *with you*, then keep them on your team. If not, kick them off your squad. You will need to decide whether these unsupportive individuals should be placed on the sideline or completely removed from your life. The

Coach's Rule: Know who is *with you* and who is not.

next chapter will cover how you should handle the people who are not *with you*.

In football, once the ball is snapped, the quarterback runs the offense. He must read the coverage, implement the plays, make adjustments if necessary, and formulate quick decisions. The goal is to make forward progress. How he achieves this depends on the play. Perhaps he runs the ball, or hands it off to a halfback. Maybe he passes it to his star wide receiver. Regardless of the play, he needs ten other players on the field to be *with him*.

The chapter titled “What It Means to Win” will help you determine what your goals are. In “What’s in Your Playbook,” you’ll define your plans for each of your objectives.

In life, you are the quarterback. You control the ball. But you’ll need other players to be *with you*. A team of supporters is required to win. You must have wide receivers, running backs, and an offensive line.

The O-line is critical, but gets little glory. While they’re not the *sexy* players shown on sports highlights, their role should not

Are You With Me?

be underestimated. The center, guards, and tackles use their size and strength to protect the quarterback. They push the defensive line back and clear paths for their teammates to break through for a run. They’re the foundation of the team’s offense. A strong offensive line helps win football games. A weak one can be catastrophic.

Jay Cutler experienced such disastrous effects when he joined the Chicago Bears in 2009. Plagued with terrible pass protection, seven-step drops, and slow-developing routes, Cutler has been sacked 110 times in forty-one games. This means Cutler often was on the run, trying to dodge hungry pass rushers. A team cannot win games if the offensive line can’t protect the quarterback.

Chicago Bears 2009–2011 seasons

- ✓ Have given up more sacks than any other team
- ✓ Have no offensive linemen ranked in the top 15 of any of the five O-line positions

The same is true in your personal life. You need an offensive line to provide protection. Defenders will blitz, and you must also beware of the blindside. Without the O-line and your other teammates, your chances of crossing the goal line are slim.

Winning was a habit for NFL-coaching icon Vince Lombardi. In his first season as head coach with the Green Bay Packers, he was named NFL Coach of the Year. During his tenure with the Packers, Lombardi led the team to five NFL championships in seven years, three of which were consecutive wins. The Packers became the first-ever Super Bowl champs in 1966. They then won Super Bowl II the following year.

“The measure of who we are is what we do with what we have.”

—Vince Lombardi

Move the Ball

Lombardi was successful because he built upon the existing talent and reconditioned the team's mindset. He focused them on a winning mindset. With Vince, finishing second was not an option. Vince Lombardi knew what was needed to win.

"There is no room for second place. There is only one place in my game, and that's first place."
—Vince Lombardi

Look in the mirror, achieving your goals starts with you. First, you must believe in yourself. Second, you must commit to the game. Be obsessed with winning. Third, you must surround yourself with people who will help you win.

Do you have people that are currently *with you*? Will your existing team march alongside you toward your goal posts of victory? If so, build those people into your playbook. If not, drop them from your team.

As a teenager, one of my children struggled with depression and high levels of anxiety. As a coping mechanism, he resorted to self-mutilation. The act of cutting, scratching, or burning himself was an outlet to relive painful or hard-to-express feelings. It is not uncommon for adolescents to engage in this behavior. If left untreated, due to the individual's lack of self-control and the addictive nature of these acts, these behaviors can lead to actual suicide attempts. Unlike certain childhood behaviors, this was not something that my son would "grow out of." He needed professional help.

Our goal was to find a treatment plan that would help him better express his feelings, reduce his sense of loneliness, and increase his self-esteem. Having a team of supporters was critical in his ability to overcome this condition. He checked into a psychiatric hospital where he would be surrounded with a staff of professionals who were on his team. They, along with his psy-

Are You With Me?

chologist, could provide him with coping tools and techniques necessary to achieve our goal. His family and friends were also *with him*—they provided emotional support and encouragement as my son went through this difficult time. Without this support network, the likelihood of achieving our goal would be very small. You must know who is *with you* and who will help you succeed.

Paul "Bear" Bryant is a college football coaching legend best known for his tenure as head coach at the University of Alabama. When Bryant retired in 1982, he held the record for most wins as a head coach in college football history: 323-85-17.

Bear Bryant had three rules for coaching:

Rule 1: *Surround yourself with people who can't live without football.*

Rule 2: *Recognize winners.*

Rule 3: *Have a plan for everything.*

This chapter focuses on the first two rules. The third rule is linked to developing your playbook, which is the underpinning needed to achieve your goals. Your plan will be discussed in later chapters.

"What Does It Mean to Win?" will help you identify your short-, medium-, and long-term goals. Once you define the goals, you must follow a three-step process.

Bear Bryant highlights:

- ✓ Led Crimson Tide to 6 national and 13 Southeastern Conference (SEC) championships
- ✓ During the 1960s and 1970s, no other team won more football games

Move the Ball

COACH'S PLAYBOOK

1. Be committed to the goal.
2. Surround yourself with people who are passionate about your goals.
3. Know who the winners are on your team, and use them to get into the end zone.



Step 1: Are you committed to your goal? Are you with you?

You must be committed mentally, emotionally, and physically if you want to accomplish your goals. There are times when *you* won't be *with you*. Doubt and fear of the unknown and failure deter you from progressing forward. This critic within convinces us that we cannot achieve our dreams. It's a conservative inner voice who wants you to remain in your comfort zone. Push yourself into the *gray zone* and get comfortable with the unfamiliar. *You must eliminate the critic within.*

Step 2: Who shares your passion for this goal?

You need people who get excited about your ambitions. They may be people who aspire to achieve the same goal. They may simply be supporters committed to keeping you motivated. Let these friends know about your goals. Let your network's passion drive you to move forward. Use others to provide moral support and an attentive ear.

Are You With Me?

Next, let others know about it. You've already written down the goals, but now put it on the record. By making your support circle know what your goal is, you have increased your network of moral support and attentive ears. Learning from others can also accelerate your game plan. Your teammates will keep you grounded and energized to score.

I wanted to attend law school, but after graduating from engineering school, I could not afford to be a fulltime student. I was a single parent raising three children. I started working and put my law school plans on hold.

I revisited this goal five years later when I took a job with The Boeing Company. Boeing provided a generous educational benefit package, and I knew it was time to go back to school. One large constraint remained: *Who will watch my children while I'm in class?*

I called my mother, who was very supportive. She would watch the kids in the evenings. I started law school two months later. Attending evening classes three nights a week was tough. After my first year, I transferred to a more prestigious law school which required me to attend class four nights each week. It was almost unbearable. The support of my friends, employees, and coworkers kept me going. I used their energy to drive me forward. This is essential if you want to win.

While football and life have similarities, they also have differences. In football, the guys on the football field are *all* motivated to win the next game. Everything they do is focused on achieving this objective. On your life's field, not all of your teammates have to be driven towards your goal. Rather, most of your squad will have their own goals they are working towards. But these folks are willing to help you succeed in your life's goals as well. Find people who are passionate about seeing you achieve your dreams.

Move the Ball

If you already have a support network in place, that is great. Keep them out on the field with you. If you do not have one, make it a priority to build your team. The first step is self-awareness. Identify what type of support structure you need. Then recruit your teammates.

Take an example of a mother who works full-time and wants to attend classes in the evening. She has children and will need coverage while she is in class. She considers the possibility of taking a class earlier in the day too. Now that she has identified these needs, she can look to see what family or friends might be willing to provide child care. She could also approach her boss to see if accommodations could be made with her work schedule to attend earlier classes.

No matter what situation you are in, this approach can work.

Step 3: Know who the winners are on your team.

Bear Bryant's second coaching rule was to recognize winners. You must have winners on your team. You need go-to receivers. A strong offensive line is essential. These players are going to protect you, but also energize you to press forward.

Shortly after I began writing this book, I attended a short writing course in Oklahoma City taught by New York *Times* best-selling author Bill Bernhardt. During the week-long class, my six fellow writers, our instructor, and I critiqued each other's work. While I learned valuable lessons about writing, the course gave me something that was priceless: *A group of winners who would motivate me every day to keep writing.*

When I walked in the room on the first day of class, I didn't know anyone. But when I left on Friday afternoon, I knew I had built new lifelong friendships. We kept in touch and created a private Facebook page where we posted every day. We supported

Are You With Me?

each other and provided feedback on everyone's writing. My new teammates' passion and energy energized me. They kept me going by providing emotional support, allowing me to bounce ideas off them, and challenging my assertions. Thank you, Magnificent Seven (this is what our Facebook group is called)!

I worked fulltime while writing this book. I also had four children living at home. From Monday through Saturday each week, I shuffled kids between cheerleading practices, football games, fundraising activities, and other events. I easily could have made excuses for not writing. But I didn't because these winners were *with me*.

If you want to win your life's game, a team of supporters is required. Winning starts with defining your goals and having a plan, but you need a team to execute your playbook. Having winners on the field ensured that I would deliver. They helped me move the ball.

Knute Rockne was a phenomenal college football coach. As Notre Dame's head coach from 1918–1930, Rockne set what was, for many decades, the greatest all-time winning percentage record at 88.1 percent. He led Notre Dame to six national championships and five undefeated seasons. Teamwork was the secret.

You have begun the journey with me down the field. Once you define your goals, you'll develop the playbook. You'll

Coach's Rule: You need winners on your team to energize you to complete your goals.

"The secret is to work less as individuals and more as a team. As a coach, I play not my eleven best, but my best eleven."
— Knute Rockne

Move the Ball

discover how to use your team to provide coverage, keep you grounded, and execute monumental plays. Put your best team forward and play the game with your winners. *Are you with me?*

Coach's Chalkboard

- Make sure you are with you.
- Find people that are with you.
- Identify winners to get into the end zone.

"I don't want ordinary people. I want people who are willing to sacrifice and do without a lot of those things ordinary students get to do. That's what it takes to win."

-Bear Bryant

If you enjoyed reading this chapter, you can order your copy of *Move the Ball* at www.dominatandmove.com or you can get it on Amazon.com.