

Play to win: Liam Sheedy talks leadership

Tipperary Hurling's All-Ireland manager and Bank of Ireland provincial director for Munster applies the same leadership style both on and off the pitch.

Bank of Ireland's Munster manager Liam Sheedy will go down in history for having brought Tipperary's senior hurling team to victory twice, in 2010 and in 2019.

At the recent [The Real Deal 2019](#) event at Goffs in Kildare, Sheedy spoke levelly about how his leadership style both on the pitch and in business is very much the same: it is about lighting a fire inside people and inspiring a team-based culture.

He is a passionate advocate for strong engagement and building relationships, with an unrivalled energy and work ethic to develop and enhance innovation within teams.

Responding to a question about returning to Tipperary hurling a second time. Sheedy said: "I don't do fear. I'm not being flippant. But if you go into something you have to know that you want to make a difference. And ultimately, I believed I could make a difference."

And what a difference he made. On 18 August 2019, Tipperary beat Kilkenny by 3-25 to 0-20 in the All-Ireland final to win their 28th All-Ireland title and Sheedy's second as manager nine years apart.

At the event Sheedy remarked: "I was a better leader in 2019 than I was in 2010, because I had eight years' management experience at Bank of Ireland.

"Once you know you are doing all that you can, you can't do any more. When you are involved with teams and they are performing at a level where they enjoy what they do. When you know the team is giving it 100pc, it's a good thing to be around."

Highlights from Liam Sheedy at The Real Deal 2019

Building culture:

https://youtu.be/Kow76L_0Vfw

I think the only way to build culture is from the bottom up. I think they create it and they hold themselves accountable towards it, because I've enough to be getting on with. I can't be the person driving the culture all the time. But there is massive leadership in any team, and I think if

you get two leaders to come in, and sort of start to build it, and then people understand, and once they start to self-correct it's a wonderful, wonderful place to be. Because, you know, ultimately, if you're not bought into the culture of Tipperary Hurling, then you will part. Because I cannot have somebody that isn't wrapped into that trust, that respect, that sense of enjoyment, all the aspects that you're looking for. And you know, if you're going to want to perform in front of 80,000 people, you need to have the right culture and as I said, I put way more emphasis on culture in 2019 versus 2008."

'Lighting the fire within them':

<https://youtu.be/a2MCyl-0vts>

My job, whether it is at Bank of Ireland or be it in Tipperary is to light the fire inside in them and not underneath them. And that's because, you know, you might you might get the dressing room speech right every now and again where you can give a bit of a bit of a call to arms and rally the troops and do a bit of roaring and balling, but ultimately, you'll get spun out of that fairly quick and so will they. So I think it's [about] trying to find what makes them tick. And how can you get that burning passion they have inside them and if you can light the fire inside them that's where you really get to see the real player or the real team player coming through.

Integrating data and analytics with culture:

<https://youtu.be/gyTnl0g1o0A>

It's trying to get the balance right. Look, data and analytics have a massive role to play. The data I had going into all of my championship matches, going into the All-Ireland final, you know, and the analysis I had done, really had me well-placed in terms of how I wanted to set up my team. But it wasn't at the expense of being able to go out there and really perform to the way you want to perform. Because sometimes you can, they can force people to be very rigid and very nearly robotic. I don't want to create robots in order to fail. I want to see those guys going out there and really expressing themselves. So, I think it's about getting the balance right. And ultimately, if you don't have a proper culture, any data and analytics won't change your team performance or won't allow you to deliver on your team's potential unless you have the culture right. Because if that culture is right, then that allows you to pour in data and analytics on top, in my view.

Giving it 100pc:

<https://youtu.be/XuatRlrZyvl>

I don't have a set of tools that I use on a Monday to Friday and I change the toolbox and take a different toolbox with me on a Tuesday or on a Friday night. It's the same set of tools used. At the end of the day, you're managing people, you're looking to get the best out of people and once you

are getting the best out of the group well you can only be happy once you know that everybody's given it 100pc.

Ticking all the boxes:

<https://youtu.be/q1pAkv2mN2A>

Walking out that tunnel, knowing that you have ticked every box is the only way I could ever go out that tunnel. You know, if you felt you had left gaps or there were things you hadn't done that you should have done, that's what would eat me alive. But I think in any walk of life, there are people are managing people, once you know that you're doing all you can you can't do any more.

- *The Real Deal 2019 event took place in Goffs in October 2019 and was supported by Renatus, Bank of Ireland, Fitzgerald Power, The Sunday Times, The Panel, Davy, Byrne Wallace and The Pudding. To get more video highlights, [click here](#)*

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