Introduction
This paper will take a look at the importance of team identity from a coaching point of view. There are 2 types of teams. Teams that have an identity and teams that don’t. Identity is subjective, but history will show that majority of successful teams have had an strong sense of Identity.

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The Pygmalion effect, or the Rosenthal effect, is a psychological phenomenon whereby the expectation placed on individuals and groups dictates the way they perform. Tell an athlete or team that they have a particular attribute for an extended period of time and they will soon adopt that attribute. Team identity is an abstract concept and yet some teams just exude a certain personality. The way they play, the fans that support them, the players they recruit; every facet of their being embodies an ethos.
Taking a look at 3 of the most iconic sporting franchise of the modern sporting era, whilst there are many common themes across the 3 teams, a team's identity cannot be copied or replicated. A team's identity needs to be developed internally, with many things to be considered IE.

- Strengths & weakness’ of the playing and coaching group
- Expectations set and standards upheld
- Constant re-enforcement of purpose
- Values driven towards high performance
- Selection of and empowerment of leadership group
Looking at the great sporting teams around the world, we don't have to look to far to find the greatest and most successful sporting franchise of all time. The All blacks have a number mantra’s or philosophies that they live by. The two I would like to focus on is:

1. **Better people = Better All Blacks**

On the surface this might look like a “no dick heads policy”. When actually its built around the search for constant development and self improvement. Physically this can be applied and measured easily, but mentally is where the All Blacks made big gains, individually players really have to get to know themselves better. The better you know your self the more you understand what you are capable of, what stimulates you, what puts you off your game (red head) and more importantly what is your anchor? your anchor will get you back on track (blue head) and calm under pressure.
2. Legacy
It's the players' responsibility to enhance the legacy of the All Black jersey. The legacy that has been left by the players that played before them, the legacy that will be forged by the players that play after them and the legacy of the nation's expectation.
Every single member is well aware of the privilege that they have been presented. Not only are they playing for the legacy of past players but also they are playing for every other New Zealander who will never be afforded the same privilege.

These 2 values are easy to understand and relatable to the All Blacks everyday life. They live and breathe these mantra's or philosophies day in day out.

A key ingredient to make sure these Philosophies are carried out is leaders. The All Blacks have been blessed with excellent leaders, In recent times names such as McCaw & Reid are good representatives of captains that have come before them. Captains aren't the only leaders, senior players & key players also play a role in maintaining standards, pushing themes and the coaching groups messaging.
Blue Collar Attitude
“Do your job”

New England Patriots have created a dynasty in the NFL over the past 15 years. 15 straight winning seasons, 13 Playoff appearances, 8 divisional titles (which means they have been to 8 super bowls) 5 championships with a shot at a 6th ring this season. Coach Bill Belichick has had one main Philosophy through that 15 year period, “DO YOUR JOB”. The brilliance is in the simplicity. It makes it easy for the player group when the message is that simple. If they know what their job is, then they just have to do that job to the best of their ability. If they don't know what their job is? They only have 1 more step to take, Find out what their job is. Then go do that job to the best of their ability.

Coach Belichick has 5 keys to effective coaching.
1. Communicate the Game Plan
2. Set Expectations for Each Player
3. Practice the Fundamentals
4. Provide Immediate Feedback
5. Encourage Trust and Inspire Confidence
Leadership has to be the other biggest factor to the franchises success. Tom Brady (Quarterback) will finish his career as the greatest player of all time. His performance obviously influences results but it’s his tenacious competitiveness that drives him to all the other team members to an amazingly high standard.

The Yankees have the best players, that's why they win, that's why they sell exorbitant amounts of merchandise, that's one of the ways they make so much money, that's why they can afford the best players. That's why they win.

The New York Yankees have always been tarnished with the brush of “arrogant” and sometimes “elitist persona”. But the Yankees don't shy away from those labels, one might say they actually embrace it and use it to their advantage.
After they acquired Babe Ruth, winning became habitual, a standard of excellence was naturally imposed, with some of the finest players who ever lived ensuring it's enforcement and pushing New York to greatness. Lou Gehrig. Joe DiMaggio. Mickey Mantle. Derek Jeter. All were the most revered players of their generation. All were Yankees. They were the keepers of the flame, the Stewards of Yankee Greatness, embodying the ethics, skills and ideals that enabled them to be so successful.

Whilst they have payed top dollar to attract the best players, those players must live up to those expectations whilst also at the same time leading, inspiring and developing the younger players to be future hall of famers.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Team with Identity</th>
<th>Team without Identity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>Values collectively agreed upon and adhered too</td>
<td>Vague values that don't get actioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Empowered with responsibility to drive standards and lead</td>
<td>Aimless, restricted as to how they can lead. Frustrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>Players have strong trust and rely on each other</td>
<td>Players struggle to trust other players but also trust coaches strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacrifice</td>
<td>Players willing to push themselves to their limits</td>
<td>Players will put themselves before the team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Roles</td>
<td>Roles &amp; Expectations clearly defined</td>
<td>Players confused on how they are suppose to contribute</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Characteristics of successful teams that have identity

- **Clearly define purpose**
  At the very start of the campaign *everyone* involved in the team is aware of what the teams purpose is (what is the team working towards). Clarity on what exactly the purpose means. Finally clarity is provided on *why* that is the teams purpose.

- **Establish team values**
  Collectively the group should decide on what values are the most meaningful to them. The agreed upon values must be aligned with the teams purpose. Values must be constantly referred to.

- **Leadership**
  Possibly the most important ingredient to success and creating or maintaining an identity. They are the syphon for the coaches messaging ie re-enforcing the purpose, maintain the standards and ultimately push the group towards high performance. Its not easy but the coaching group needs to work hard at maintaining a symbiotic relationship between them and the leadership group.
**Trust**
Trust is something earned not given. Trust can be forged in many ways. Easiest way to do it in rugby is train really hard together, when you are pushed to the limit of exhaustion, people show their true colors (positive or negative) Trust is vital to a player playing to his full potential. If a player has complete faith in his teammates then he only has to worry about his performance.
If a player trusts the coaching he is receiving, then he can solely concentrate about his personal performance.

**Sacrifice**
People who feel like a valued member will be willing to sacrifice that much more to ensure the team's success.
Sacrifices must be made, individually and collectively to achieve ultimate glory.

**Individual Roles**
Explanation to the individual or sub group on what they contribute to the team and why they are essential to the team's success. This process is key on educating the individual or sub group on what they ARE but equally as important, what they ARE NOT.
Simple is key. Players/people can perform much better when the request is simple to understand.
Summary

whilst there is no formulae to construct a successful Identity, I believe there a few things you must put in place to give yourself a chance to be true to your affirmation of your identity and ultimately result in continued success

• Clearly stated purpose and values
• Constant re-enforcement of purpose or themes
• Conviction to uphold values
• Clearly stated expectations
• United front with leadership group
• Consistency in messaging from coaches
• Continual search to give and receive clarity