

Managing in Modern Football

Considerations around leadership and strategies

By

Mark Miller

Dissertation submitted in part of the requirements
For the UEFA Pro License 2015/1017



Tutor; Stephen Grima

Contents

1	Introduction	5
2	Leaders and Strategists: Born or Made?	8
	2.1 Ends and Means: Thinking Strategically	10
3	Taking the Lead-and Defending it.	12
	3.1 The Research Subjects: The Three Mistrs	16
	3.2 Seduction in the Fortress: Marco Baroni.....	18
	3.3 Winning, Planning and Creating: Howard Wilkinson	23
	3.4 Timing, Talking and Travelling: Roberto Martinez.....	26
4	Conclusions and Recommendations.	28
	4.1 Hearts, Minds and Memories.....	29
	4.2 Learning Outcomes	31
5	Bibliography	34

Acknowledgements

The people who I would like to thank are many, some who did not help with this thesis, but have been part of my development, and have helped me become a better leader coach and person. My experiences with them have helped me to write this thesis.

Dr Gary Armstrong, my friend, my teacher, who put me back in school and showed me how to write a thesis and make a proper research.

Many thanks to his patience, and time whom without his help this thesis would never have been completed.

Howard Wilkinson for his time, honesty, and experience's in leading and managing a football club. Howard was the first UEFA coach educator who came to Malta and help set up the first UEFA 'A' License coaching courses.

Marco Baroni, although I could not communicate too much because of the language barrier he welcomed us into his club and made us feel all at home.

Roberto Martinez, during our short visit to Belgium, showed us what the word 'humble' means. He was always ready to answer any questions, no matter what time of day it was.

A special thanks to Stephen Grima, course director who through his 'endeavours' has managed to put Malta football education on the map of Europe, giving the Maltese coaches a chance to rub shoulders with the best.

Abstract

The profession that I have been part of since the age of 17 is not one that encouraged book reading. Since becoming a coach/manager, it has been something I have done frequently to help me in my journey as a football coach. From explorers to Politicians, they all interested me in how they lead and in what form they could be used in football. Football coaches have talked about how they seek inspiration from others in similar positions outside and beyond football and their strategies.

This research was comforting and fascinating. The year and a half of reading explaining the varieties of styles and possibilities no one idea could capture the task of being a leader.

Also when I consider strategy the varieties were vast. The game stresses both qualities and I hope that I am a better leader after the result of this research.

From this study there was a comfort in listening to the words and wisdom of 3 experienced coaches whose careers illustrate many things that anyone in the game should consider.

I learned the following;

1. That nobody forgets a good teacher whether it is at junior level or at the top of the game. The manager/coach can make or break a player so this is a huge responsibility, the coach might make more time for when considering strategy and how they lead.
2. Having a character might be over rated in terms of achievement, but more important for success is the selection and support of his reliable backroom staff. Roles and responsibilities have to be worked out and share the same vision of the manager and coach.
3. The game of yesterday was the same but different. Managers and coaches in the times past had more time to implement their ideas. Defeat was tolerated for longer. The culture around the game has changed and those seeking a career in football have to consider how their leadership and strategies has to impact far sooner than later it was allowed a decade ago.

Final words should go to the men I have interviewed Marco Baroni the ideal working situation was to build a fortress wherein all could see by those in it whilst keeping the rest out. Howard Wilkinson memorable line the club chairman's wanted to appoint someone who wins games for them. Roberto Martinez stated effort usually produced results but there is no magic formula 'when the ball hit the back of the net then what you were doing is right'

1 Introduction

In contemporary elite level football the man who holds the title of 'Manager' or 'Head Coach' has as his ultimate occupational vindication the task of not losing a football match. In a winner-loser culture that is football the Manager/Head Coach is thus the focus of a collective effort; ideally all associated with the named club he is nominally head of are pulling in the same direction in pursuing football honours. This is not always the case as a consequence of a variety of factors both institutional and personal. The position of football manager is thus ever precarious. In this reality the men appointed to lead a football club might be expected to evidence abilities and even qualifications that somehow set them apart from those who think they can do the job. History tells us however that the appointment to the position of Manager/Head Coach even at elite level is somewhat arbitrary and often defies logic. We can thus ask what it is that a club should ideally look for in seeking a Manager/Head Coach and ask conversely what the men seeking such positions should stress as their assets for such employment. In the absence of such a formality or procedure the position is given to those who are attributed by others or stress their own qualities of leadership alongside the reputation many carry or propose around something called strategy.

These two elements are obviously vital to a profession like football but the evidence suggest that these qualities are not working very well for the majority of individuals appointed to the position of Manager/Head Coach.

The average 'job expectancy' of an English top division football manager has drastically decreased since the English Premier League competition began in 1992-93. On the opening day of that season, the 22 bosses had been in their jobs for an average of 3.24 years (Harris 2015). Annually in England some 66% of managers of the 92 professional clubs that constitute the English Premier League (EPL) and the Football League (FL) are dismissed from such a role. The League Managers' Association's (LMA) most recent statistics (recorded during the 2014-15 season), show that the average term for a Premier League boss was now 1.4 years. When the other three professional divisions in England are taken into account (the Championship, League One and League Two), this figure drops to just 1.23 years. The Championship, English football's second tier, is the least secure home for managers, with the average spell in charge recently recorded at just 0.86 years (Steinberg 2016).

Indeed, the LMA's report for the 2014-15 season showed that the 47 managerial sackings across the top four divisions (of 92 clubs) was the most since the record high of 53 in 2001-02. This is not just an English problem

In Italy, the landscape is even more volatile, with the tenure of a Serie A head-coach averagely lasting 0.9 years, the lowest of Europe's top 'five' leagues (Armanini 2016). This is perhaps unsurprising when taking into account some of Italy's all-powerful and capricious presidents, such as Palermo's Maurizio Zamparini. Since taking over the club in 2002, he has overseen 37 changes of Head-Coach. This has earned him the rubric '*Mangia Allenatori*' (Manager-Eater). Such a phenomenon is also endemic in Italy's top clubs. In the last six years, both AC Milan and Inter have changed their head coach six and eight times respectively. Like the Italian '*tecnico*', the Spanish Head-Coach tends to focus on philosophy and style of play, such as the *Juego de Posicion* (positional guru). With Presidents and Directors of Football usually overseeing player transfers, wage structuring and the commercial matters, the primary concern of the Head Coach lies with training the team and fostering their player's holistic and tactical development. There tends not to be the authoritarian, 'Big Man' characters associated with the English way of doing things.

In any other industry or business the above statistics would provoke soul-searching around issues of variously; recruitment and retention, the loss of industry based skills-sets and a questioning of due diligence around the competence of interview panels. Football is different. It is a world of its own. There is however no shortage of men who seek to hold the aforementioned job titles. At elite level football the position of Manager/Head Coach is more than merely managing or coaching a squad of players for approximately 50 games a year. Due to the fascination such men attract and the profile that football now carries in public life every word, gesture, action and non-action of such men is open to media-led scrutiny. Blame for defeat is rarely laid at the feet of the players; Managers and Coaches must pay the price of defeat and indeed of many other things that might go wrong at the club. The modern game is now underpinned by a revolving-door culture, elite level clubs chop and change managers and players with dizzying regularity. Just how, we might ask can a man be prepared for the unpredictable circumstances and indeed stupidities that football carries at both Board room and playing levels?

How volatile is the position of Manager/Head Coach? In 2009, Arsene Wenger – the current Arsenal boss and longest serving manager in the EPL (currently over 20years) – likened his profession to living on a volcano: any day could be the last (see Calvin 2015). With dismissals so integral to the genre of football management the curious might ask ; why are so many Manager/Coaches expendable? This is particularly relevant to an industry such as football, in which the processes of commercialization has ensured that one-club players and managers are a dying breed .This necessarily brings supplementary questions most notably; from where came the culture of instant

gratification i.e. the need for near-instant success that provides the excuse of so many dismissals? Another question we might ask is how in many instances the managers/coaches are now more famous than the players and at times command more media headlines than an international standard goal scorer? In previous decades the manager was not the story and his wages barely matched an average squad player. Until the past 15 years the Manager/Head Coach's tenure was invariably longer; to a cynic his incompetence was tolerated for longer. He in turn generally received respect from the playing squad and was spoken of by supporters with that same sense of respect. Things were undeniably different decades previously and for Managers/Coach's probably better.

In what follows analysis will draw on the life stories of three elite level football managers -all currently employed in the game- in an attempt to understand where in their various employments did they see their role and what did they identify as the various forces (be they individuals, groups or institutional) that consciously or not conspired to frustrate or facilitate what it they were or are seeking to achieve. Employed in a status characterized by no specified formal qualification, no defined personal qualities, no universally agreed job spec, no recognized career targets and progressions and no national pay scales, the three took various jobs often with little idea as to what they were entering into and little knowledge about those that employed them. Once employed they had then to win the trust and respect of a squad of players and convince the fans that they were the right men for the job. The men who accept the role of manager/coach carry the hopes and dreams of at least tens of thousands and at most tens of millions. They carry also a fascination from those outside the game as to how they do what they do. As a consequence various media are forever seeking insights into their world. The least that such men should carry with them in this occupational status are notions of Leadership and Strategy.

2 Leaders and Strategists: Born or Made?

Since Ancient times theorists, writers, politicians, and managers of all kinds have pondered, debated and strived to understand what it means to be a leader. What qualities we might ask allowed Julius Caesar and Napoleon Bonaparte to inspire millions and become revered conquerors? What differentiates the world's business and political leaders from their followers? What traits helped football managers like Sir Alex Ferguson and Helenio Herrera become cult-like figures amongst players and supporters? Underlying all of these questions is an assumption that it is possible to distinguish 'good' leadership and conversely 'bad' leadership and by association good strategy and bad. For as long as leaders have led, attempts have been made to analyse leadership be it from a military, business, political, academic or sporting perspective. The success or failure of a group task or enterprise in all walks of life has invariably been attributed not to the actions of the collective, but to a chosen or self-appointed leader. Leaders have thus always provided for a fascination. Reflection on leadership is present in the writings of classical Greek philosophers Plutarch and Aristotle – the latter famously observed: *"He who has never learned to obey cannot be a good commander"* (cited in Kruse 2012). The implication for football management if one accepts the statement is that leaders need come out of the ranks of former players. The number of former footballers found in management positions suggests there is lot of truth in this albeit such a correlate can be challenged.

The study of leadership as an academic discipline can be traced back to the nineteenth century, during which at an early stage of development these theories were used for logical reasoning (Grout and Fisher 2011). These ideas are centred in an essentialist view that leaders were born not made. In academic parlance, this became known as 'Great Man' theory, which later gave rise to what might best be termed Trait theory (the belief that all leaders possess some specific personality traits that set them apart). One of the most famous proponents of the former school was Victorian intellectual, Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881), who believed that: *"The history of the world is but a biography of great men"*. Through their innate personal charisma, intelligence, wisdom or Machiavellianism, great men inspired followers and consequently had a decisive historical impact. This view was also endorsed by the German philosopher, Friedrich Nietzsche, who in his work *Untimely Meditations* wrote, *"[...] the goal of humanity cannot lie in its end but only in its highest exemplars"* (cited in Breazeale 1997: 111). Some disagree with such postulations.

The idea that an individual can be a 'born leader' remains an oft-quoted cliché, (not least in the world of football). That said the 'Great Man' theory is now considered

unfashionable. This prevailing view is captured by American scholar and organizational consultant Warren Bennis (1999: 163) who stated: “*The most dangerous leadership myth is that leaders are born [...]. That’s nonsense; in fact, the opposite is true. Leaders are made rather than born*”. A plethora of academic explanations have since been advanced attempting to categorise leadership styles and define what constitutes ‘effective’ leadership. These include: *Behavioural Theory*, from which three leadership styles (autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire) let go were identified (see Lewin, Lippit and White 1939). Research on this topic might also look to *Situational and Contingency Leadership* theory which holds that there is no single style of leadership and good effective leaders assess their environment and the conditions of the moment before deciding on a course of action (see Hersey and Blanchard 1988). Another option of inquiry is *Transactional Leadership* theory that speaks of a managerial style that focuses on supervision, organisation and group performance through employing a reward and punishment approach. Then comes *Transformational Leadership*, which concentrates on the relationship between leader and followers, to maintain that a successful leader has both great communication and inspirational skills that motivate followers to perform (see Burns 1978; Bass 1981). The modern-day view of leadership is underpinned by a recognition that different situations call for different approaches, and a good leader is adept at recognising those situations and adapting their behaviour accordingly (Grout and Fisher 2011: 21). The question that concerns this inquiry is whether football is in any way impervious to such ideas and if not what style of leadership is the most effective and why.

Entrepreneur and leadership author, Kevin Kruse, argues for the utility in establishing what leadership is not. Leadership he argues that it has nothing to do with seniority or one’s position in the hierarchy of a company – and leadership as a quality does not appear magically appear when you reach a certain pay grade (Kruse 2013). Furthermore, he dismisses the idea that all leaders have fixed personal attributes – that they have to be domineering charismatic individuals. A quiet leader who works to inspire behind the scenes may be just as effective as an extroverted personality barking orders. Significantly, Kruse distinguishes between leadership and management. Managers need to plan, measure, monitor, coordinate, solve, hire, fire, and so many other things (ibid).

But managers will not necessarily establish a direction or vision for the group: Leaders set out this vision, they establish how to achieve it and then communicate, persuade and motivate everyone to get on board to achieve that vision (Fisher and Grout 2011). By establishing what leadership is not, Kruse thereby offers a contemporary and workable definition: “Leadership is a process of social influence, which maximizes the efforts of others, towards the achievement of a goal.” (Kruse 2013). Of all the theories and

conflicting points of view, it is commonly agreed that a successful leader needs an effective strategy, which is establishing goals and planning the best course of action to attain them. This brings us to the notion of *strategy* which Management consultant specialist Max McKeown (2015) argues, "*.. Is about shaping the future – it is about how people attain desirable ends with available means*". But we might ask; where do Strategy and Leadership meet?

2.1 Ends and Means: Thinking Strategically

The study of strategy derives from two ancient Greek words: '*stratos*' (army) and '*ago*' (lead). History's most famed military conquerors have often, first and foremost, been renowned for their expertise in strategy. The word was first used in Athens (508 BC) to describe the art of leadership used by the 10 Generals on the War Council (cf McKeown 2015). Similar concepts about strategy then emerged in Asia, most famously in Sun Tzu's *Art of War* (written in 200 BC), which listed the different principles that military leaders need follow to win and achieve their goals. The book is still highly influential and its blueprint is still followed by many books examining strategy. Whilst the term has undoubted military connotations, strategy has become a crucial feature of leadership in a variety of sectors. In the simplest terms, it is about moving from where you are to where you want to be (Berry 2012). Without a clearly defined strategy, it is very hard for a leader to both motivate their group and monitor progression. Just like effective leadership, an effective strategy requires flexibility and the perception to tailor a strategy to different groups and situations.

In the context of this analysis, the military connotations around the term '*strategy*' are perhaps more relevant to football than to business. Like in the military strategy, the ultimate aim in football is defeating the opposition competing on the same field. In pursuit of this Managers/coaches are ever- devising strategies to reach short-term goals (such as improving a certain tactic which will enable victory over the immediate opposition) combined with long - term goals (such as winning the league title or remaining in the division).

This thinking will include variously; strategies to maintain group efficacy and cohesion, strategies to transmit effective knowledge transfer and strategies to ensure that individual levels of motivation remain high. But football Managers /Head Coaches have strategies to contend with beyond the playing squad. He need also have a business strategy focused on the club's profitability and sustainability and has to satisfy the customer's (both fans and Board of Directors) needs. Defeating the market opposition is a by-product of such strategy. In the world of football much of these responsibilities whilst belonging to the decisions made by the Board and Technical Directors represents

another challenges for football mangers/coaches', who in their role as a leader, must act as a passage between the commercial concerns of a football club and those of their players.

3 Taking the Lead-and Defending it.

At this stage, it is important to qualify the terms Manager/Head-Coach, which have been used throughout this discussion. Given that this dissertations interviewees come from significantly different footballing cultures – Howard Wilkinson from the management culture of Britain, and Roberto Martinez and Marco Baroni from the ‘Head-Coaching’ cultures of the European continent specifically Spain and Italy – it is important to distinguish between the statuses of both roles. In Britain, the role of the football manager has traditionally been associated with the ‘Big Man’ personalities: Sir Alex Ferguson, Brian Clough and Bill Shankly. Traditionally English football managers tended to be total control. These refined characters expected to have control over the majority of the decision-making processes at their clubs. This included complete control over staff, transfers and player contracts unless, of course, they were working under a meddling Board or owner (Coles 2015).

Though apparently fulfilling the same position, the equivalent figure to the very British notion of all authority and wisdom of ‘the Gaffer’ in Italy is known not as the manager, but as the *Tecnico* or *Allenatore* –Technician or Head coach. Far from holding an all-powerful position, their responsibilities lie with devising tactics, training and picking the team. The Head-Coach thus usually forms part of a triumvirate that, during the modern era, have run Italian clubs consisting of a Sporting Director (SD) – whose main preoccupation is deciding on transfers – and the President; invariably the ‘real’ boss and the individual with the money (Foot 2007: 216). Thus, the Italian ‘Head-Coach’ has a different set of working arrangements to that of the traditional British ‘Manager’, with implicit – or explicit depending on the level of open interference – line managers to whom they must consistently answer¹. His primary concerns thus lie with picking the team and deciding the tactics.

Of course, this fear of interference is by no means irrational; powerful – or deluded- Presidents in Italy have been renowned for trying to exert their influence over team-selections. A famous example is Silvio Berlusconi at AC Milan. It is in these situations that the Head-Coach must be both diplomatic and strong-minded. The character of Fabio Capello (who a few years ago managed the English national team), admits he

¹ One can use the current Italian champions Juventus as an illustration. Responsibility for their purchases belongs to their sporting director Fabio Paratici who talks with the club president Andrea Agnelli about transfers, and is ultimately responsible for ensuring that new arrivals fit Juve’s ethos and playing-style (*Stile Juventus*). Massimiliano Allegri the head-coach) will be consulted and his opinions heeded. However, he will not have the final say over who comes and goes.

engaged in lengthy and heated debates with Berlusconi regarding tactics and personnel, but ultimately his (Capello's) intransigent nature ensured he made the decisions and was willing to shoulder the consequences (Colombo 2016). As author Dan Fieldsend, observes when examining the recent innovations in English management structures, "*The apparent loggerheads with transfer committees and Directors of Football is a purely English problem, and if we take a club like AC Milan as a comparison, great coaches like [Arrigo] Sacchi, [Fabio] Capello and [Carlo] Ancelotti all had to deal with [General Manager] Adriano Galliani and found a way to do so.*" What this boils down to is "*a fundamental fear among English managers of outside influences and challenges to their authority.*"

In terms of the daily application, there are also conventional differences between the Italian coach and the British manager. Italian coaches study their craft at Coverciano the HQ of the Italian Football Federation opened in 1958 and focus mostly on tactical issues, of which they write a thesis. When they become 'Managers' or Head-Coaches, they have-ideally- developed a style of play and an appreciation of the 'football' side of the game. British coaches deal more with the issue of leadership, or at least did so historically (this is slowly changing). Sir Alex Ferguson's first biography, saw him talk about the 'uprisings' and 'potential coups' that threatened his time as a manager in Scottish football. The theme of the book is 'people' and relationships with rivals. On the other hand, Italian Carlo Ancelotti's recent biography ('Quiet Leadership') is about players, shape, tactics and ambitions.

Whilst the British game has been transformed over the past 15 years by the employment of foreign coaches, of the 20 incumbents in Serie A, only three are foreign-born ([Siniša Mihajlović](#) at Torino, Ivan [Jurić](#) at Genoa and Paulo Sousa at Fiorentina). Furthermore, all three spent prolonged periods of their playing-career in Italy (Mihajlović 92-06, Jurić 01-10, Sosa 94-96 & 98-00). In Spain, six out of the 20 current head-coaches are foreign-born, four of whom are Spanish speaking Argentinians. This, compared to the thirteen foreign-born coaches currently managing in the EPL (six of whom are Spanish or Italian), demonstrates Britain's lack of qualified coaches compared to Spain and Italy. The figures as of 2014 were as follows: England had 1,395 coaches holding UEFA's A and Pro qualification badges compared to Germany's 6,934, Italy's 2,281, France's 3,308 and Spain's whopping 15,423.

Football management in Britain is thus changing. Having played at a high level was usually a prerequisite for entering club management. Now, the rite of passage has seemingly become coaching at youth level (the route taken Brendan Rodgers [Swansea, Liverpool, Celtic], Mark Warburton [Crawley, Brentford, Glasgow Rangers] and Eddie

Howe[Bournemouth]). The British approach is thus becoming more Italian -- the FA even copied the Italian FA's Coverciano's model for their recently built St George's Park national training centre and quite proudly admits to being influenced by it (Fieldsend 2016). This cultural shift illustrates the fact that employing individuals as 'Head-Coaches' rather than Managers' is now becoming increasingly fashionable. This is especially true in the upper ranks, where the English Premier League (EPL) has seen an influx of foreign coaches². This has led to a situation in which the boundaries between the roles of 'manager' and 'Head-Coach' have become blurred. The two terms are often used interchangeably by some British journalists, despite the fact that some bosses in the EPL are hired under the job specification of 'Head Coach'. Maurizio Pochettino, Head-Coach at Tottenham Hotspurs was quick to point out the difference to the English media during a press conference in 2015:

"If you are the manager, you decide many things about the club. But if you are a head coach, your responsibility is to play better, try to improve the players and to get positive results. At Southampton, I was a manager. My responsibility was not only to coach the team. With Tottenham, I am a head coach. A head coach is head of your department. My department is to train the team." (Cited in Coles 2015).

Regardless of these distinctions, the role of a football manager/coach is a unique leadership position. In Italy the term 'Mister' is meaning the same with such individuals. The term originates from the English ex-pats who facilitated the distribution of *il calico*. The same terminology is used in Spain and reflects the origin of the game in that country too. But the term is loaded; it reflects a sense of admiration and respect from players towards the man who is considered a tactician and strategist as much as a 'leader'. The term is thus a form of respect for coaching which in Italy and Spain has always been viewed as more academic than it has been in England. As John Foot (2007: 216) notes for Italy, Head Coaches are "[...] expected to be a combination of soothsayer, psychologist, financial wizard, fortune teller, propagandist and press-officer." This has made leadership in football a particularly perilous business.

Similar to Italy, the presence of 'Directors of Football' (DOF) and significant backroom involvement means the Head-Coach in Spanish football is preoccupied with tactics, training and selection. There is however a marked difference in approaches between the

² At the time of writing, only seven of the Premier League's 20 managers are British (Eddie Howe, Mike Phelan, Sean Dyche, Alan Pardew, Tony Pulis, Mark Hughes and David Moyes)

Spanish coach and the English manager. According to Cristian Colás, who spent time running the Academy at Spanish second division side (Sabadell) before coaching at Biggleswade United FC (a club whose DOF is the renowned Spanish journalist Guillem Balague) the crucial issue is the level of tactical depth that Spanish coaches think with. UEFA data prior to the last World Cup showed that English football had just 1395 UEFA 'A' qualified coaches compared to Spain's 15,423. For Colás, the fact that there are so many pro-licensed coaches in Spain means that if they "*don't dig a bit deeper and attempt to learn more then they won't get the same opportunities*" (cited in Balague 2016).

At ten months, the average tenure of a Spanish head-coach in *La Liga* is marginally higher than that of Serie A coaches (CIES Football Observatory 2016). Real Madrid's famous hire and fire approach has contributed significantly to this low average; even current head-coach and recent Champions League winner, Zinedine Zidane, has admitted that the law of averages dictates he will be sacked eventually (Fisher 2016). However, the pressure is just as high amongst coaches of Spain's smaller clubs. Former Brighton manager, Gus Poyet, was recently sacked by Real Betis after just eleven games in charge. Indeed, the revolving door culture is perhaps even more established at smaller clubs due to their more precarious financial situations and the detrimental impact relegation can have in this regard. Rayo Vallecano's former boss Francisco Jémez Martín (commonly known as Paco Jemez) – whose four-year spell at the club came to an end in 2016 after Rayo were relegated – spoke to author, Dan Fieldsend, about the perilous nature of coaching in Spain:

"The advantage that we currently have [here in Spain] is that there is a lot of demand abroad for Spanish coaches so it has opened things up a bit. But had this not happened, there are lots and lots of coaches competing for a limited number of positions. It gets to the stage where the competition is vicious, in the end, you're not even thinking about improving, you're thinking about not losing your job, because you're aware that there are a lot of colleagues who fall out of the wheel within a year or two." (Cited in Fieldsend forthcoming)

The emphasis on coaching in Spain is based primarily on the structuring of training and planning. "*When you are doing your pro-license the last piece of work you have to do is to plan a whole season,*" Colas says, "*but when you give your presentation, it has to be in detail, the complete scenario, where you will be managing, how big your squad is, what your challenge will be, the possibilities of promotion and relegation plus complete information about your staff.*" (ibid).

3.1 The Research Subjects: The Three Mistfers

The research that informs this dissertation is the product of realism and good judgement. The outcome is the reflections on Strategy and Leadership from three individuals from three European countries all of which have fabulous football histories and world renowned football club cultures. This makes for fascinating cross-cultural observations. The age differential between the three sees the youngest nearing 40, the oldest in his early 70's and the one in the middle around the mid-50's and thus draws on the life stories of men separated by 15 years once and 15 years once again.

The choice of such men was logical-they were available by virtue of their teaching on UEFA courses. They were to a degree captive to the process of accrediting coaches and they were-thankfully-aware of what the process required and were generous with their time and opinions. None would claim to be representative of their respective nations. What they provide us with is their own personal thoughts on what their careers have so far achieved and what strategy and leadership they had to manifest to get to where they did. The interviews also allowed reflection on what they might have done if their time came again. [LINK](#)

Marco Baroni aged 52 as a player won the 1989-90 *Serie A* title with (Diego Maradona's) Napoli and the *Supercoppa* the following year. Baroni began coaching in 2000 after hanging up his playing boots aged 37As a Head-Coach he won the *Coppa Italia* and the Vareggio Cup (Youth level) with Juventus. Up to this day, his coaching career can be analysed in three parts. The first, from 2000 to 2007 might best be considered as the 'Serie C phase'. The second from 2007 to 2013 as the 'Youth Phase 'and the third from 2013 to today as the 'Serie B phase' Baroni learnt his trade, like many Italian coaches, in the lower reaches of the professional pyramid. He began at the club he retired at as a player –Rondinella (effectively the second team of the city of Florence).

During these early years, he bounced between clubs in Italy's bottom tier of professional football and was sacked twice, once by Montevarchi (2001-02) and once by Carrarese (2003-04). These were not hugely successful years for Baroni and ended with him leaving Ancona after keeping them in Serie C1 via a relegation play-off.

This prompted a career move in 2007 to the youth sector which saw Baroni take control of Siena's Primavera (in the era when the first team was in Serie A) . He was to briefly experience managing in Serie A for three games with the status of interim Head-Coach (2009-10) following the sacking of the first team coach Alberto Malesani. In 2010, Baroni returned to first team coaching on a permanent basis when he took the job at Serie C1

side Cremonese. Sacked at the end of the year he returned to the youth sector to take control of the Juventus' *Primavera* where over a two-year spell he won the Viareggio Cup and Coppa Italia. This success earned him his first appointment in Serie B. Guiding Lanciano to a mid-table finish in 2013/14 he then took control of Pescara but after a ninth place finish was replaced by their then youth-team coach. Baroni consequently moved to Novara and reached the play-offs for Serie A. Despite this achievement, the two parted ways. Baroni is now enjoying a steady start with Benevento. The newly promoted club currently sitting seventh place in Serie B.

The playing career of Catalan born Spaniard Roberto Martinez (aged 43 in 2015) saw him win variously; the 1993-94 *Coppa del Rey* with Zaragoza, the 1996-97 Football League Third Division with Wigan Athletic, the 1998-99 Football League Trophy with Wigan and the 2005-06 Football League Trophy with Swansea City. Martínez began his managerial career in 2007 after coming to Britain to play for Wigan, Motherwell, Walsall, Swansea and Chester. Assuming his managerial career at Swansea whom he took into the Championship he then accepted the opportunity to take over Premier League Wigan in 2009. He kept Wigan in the EPL for three consecutive seasons and was praised for achieving this whilst playing an attractive and expansive style of football. His most notable achievement to date is winning the FA Cup in 2013. This was tempered by Wigan's relegation from the EPL a few days later. The Catalan soon after left Wigan to join Everton and had a successful first season on Merseyside, with the team's attractive style of play earning them a fifth-place finish. They failed to hit the same heights again, with two EPL finishes of 11th and a feeling that the club had hugely under-achieved given the playing talent at his disposal. In the 2015-16 season

Everton lost eight of their 19 home games taking only 23 home points in total. His appointment as Belgium National coach in mid-2016 – currently considered one of the most talented national sides in the world – came as a surprise to many in the game. Since his appointment, he has won his first three World Cup qualifying games emphatically, albeit against modest opposition in Gibraltar, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Cyprus.

Howard Wilkinson's footballing career saw him between 1962-71 make 22 first team appearances for Sheffield Wednesday and 130 for Brighton, both were in the lower leagues of the English game at the time. His first honors as a Manager began in the Non-League system with Boston United when winning the 1976 Northern Premier League Challenge Cup and Northern Premier League Challenge Shield. Such achievements saw Wilkinson invited to manage the England semi-professional team and saw job offers from professional clubs. He was to be Assistant Manager then full manager at Notts County in the early 1980's before moving to his home -own club of Sheffield Wednesday in 1983.

Here he remained for five years gaining promotion to the top division of English football for the Owls in 1984 and finishing fifth in what was then Division One the 1987-88 seasons. In 1988 he was to switch to an even more high-profile managerial job at Leeds United where he remained until 1996. He was very successful at Elland Road, winning the Second Division in 1990 and the First Division title just two years later – Leeds last major honor. This accolade made him the last Englishman to win the league at top level in England. Later, he became The FA's Technical Director, producing the innovative 'Charter for Quality' which proposed the establishment of the Youth Academy system that defines much of English football's Talent Identification ethos. The document was not fully implemented but large parts of it influenced the strategy of the German FA. Wilkinson was to help the England national team out on two occasions as Caretaker- Manager. Following the departure of Glen Hoddle in 1999 Wilkinson took charge for the Wembley friendly with France in (0-2) . In October 2000 following the surprise departure of Kevin Keegan's Wilkinson again presided over an England World Cup qualifier in Finland in October 2000 (0-0). He also managed England teams at 'B' and Under-21 levels. He was to take the manager's job at Sunderland in 2002-3 but was sacked after one season, lasted just two months managing in China and returned to take temporary charge of Leicester City in 2004. He was to take the position of Technical Advisor at Notts County in 2007 and held a similar title at Sheffield Wednesday in 2009.

Wilkinson currently holds the title of Chairman of the League Managers Association and was 72 when spoken with in 2016.

3.2 Seduction in the Fortress: Marco Baroni

Club culture throughout Italy places specific demands on the Head Coach. His remit is the team and the playing squad and implicitly winning games of football. The main areas of contestation are what style of play this might be achieved by and with what personnel he chooses to do this with be it back room staff or players. The organisational structure of Italian clubs is one that is hierarchical and one that places the Head Coach in a position where beyond the aforementioned asks he has to answer to those with power or money o-most likely-r both. A further complication is the role Italian clubs give to the position of Technical Director.

Interestingly Baroni introduces a military metaphor into the first response concerning how he saw his position when stating: *You have to build a castle and put the team inside with four watch towers and watch everything and ask who or what is attacking the team? The Club environment frequently does not help the Coach who with his staff will study the dynamics of the team and discuss with the Technical Director whether a situation is the consequence of a player or something technical concerning the entire team.* Having built

the fortress the issue then was to pursue what he was employed to achieve but with one eye on those who would undermine that ambition: *In Italy the Coach is always on the defensive. I have no control in the football club except in selecting the team and the training schedule. In January of every season I prepare a report for the Board of Directors about the whole team..*

Every Head Coach has a strategy for what might best be called the Ideal squad. Experience and contacts bring knowledge about a player and some players become considered as ideal for specified Coaches and their preferred team and playing style. The club culture Baroni works in is one wherein a shopping list is sought as to which players he would like to buy. The list has to be defended; why his targets are any better than those already with the club needs explaining. The players' career might be well-known to the inquisitors and dismissed then of course are fiscal matters can the club afford the player? The issue may well be about transfer fees. Equally the fee may be overcome but not the players wage demands.

The list is then passed-up to those who hold the purse strings and matters proceed (or do not) from there. Consequently some players arrive, some do not. The full circumstances are not always fully known to the Head Coach. As Baroni explains: I sought young players not well known but showing promise and renown for being strong mentally .The club hierarchy were afraid of this idea , they asked me ;'Who is this player '?' What did he achieve'? Or they tell me; 'Nobody knows him'. On one occasion I gave a list of players to the Technical Director but all were refused. It was not actually his fault it could have been money issues i.e. the clubs budget or the player financial demands .It wasn't that the player identified were not good but maybe they didn't exactly fit in to the system and philosophy. The team did well regardless of the players who were not signed; they did better than what was expected of them.. The Head Coach could take credit for this. In effect he has made the sum of the parts a more effective working unit than the individual talents at his disposal.

The players Baroni sought did not have to be technically gifted. For him the mental side of the game was more important because he had a system - a strategy even - that asks players to buy into. For Baroni the player needs to believe that he is part of the plan and indeed essential to all that happens for the entire season. Put simply players needed to understand strategy to appreciate leadership: Any player has to be ready to work hard - passionate, hungry and determined- and mentally switched on. A good working relationship with both my staff and obviously their colleagues does not need stressing. From the very first day it is important for the player to understand how I am trying to impose things and how I want him to work .The coach has to convince the player that

his way is the correct way but this is best done by both agreeing . Everything asked of a player needs my explaining and their understanding.

Some may not understand that they are part of a system and strategy that asks them to subordinate their ego to the collective good. Sometimes insubordination to the leadership is contextual and even understood. Such attitudes however are often the pinnacle of practices that some individuals manifest throughout their weekly working lives. In such scenarios the Head Coach has to evidence leadership which, put bluntly, offers the player the option of fitting in or shipping out. There can only be one leader and someone running a campaign that undermines strategy has got to be got rid of. As Baroni explains, a problem player is a bad player to have around. Their disrespect however might be understandable when directed at the coach who has just had words with him which might not be complimentary.

When this happens the Coach must deal with the issue immediately or as fast as possible.

But, in my experience such individuals are also disrespectful to other players or members of staff. If a meeting between Coach and player does not resolve the issue the player will cause more trouble in the long run. You can make an example of him which will then be conveyed to the rest of the team. If he reuses the solution he has to be replaced.

The back –room staff have to be on board with the strategy as well. An awareness of club culture relies on the perceptiveness of the Head Coach. Ideally in taking the job he will have asked around the footballing world as to what level of organisation and indeed strategy he is walking into. He will have asked about the contests he is likely to face in his leadership and will know from fellow Coaches what clubs and Boards of Directors are chaotic. He thus has to arm himself with notions of both short –term and long-term strategy and consider where and when his leadership will be challenged or under-mined. He must thus choose his battles carefully: There are so many dynamics that you have to remember what your job is and that is the first team and results. Keep to his field of responsibility and don't step outside of it. In some club there are certain dynamics which are not conducive to change. Some places if you try to change the ethos the whole system will collapse .Even at a relatively small Serie B club if you try to change certain things you risk the chance that even the goods things will turn bad!

Football is a peculiar industry in that clubs appoints leaders but prove more than willing to tell those appointed in this role how to do their job. The Director, the media pundit and indeed the fan in many instances claim to know how to do the job better than the man who has studied the game for a living and who has lived and breathed strategy and leadership in football: The club sometimes send their technical people to watch the game and they can create problems if they disagree with my decisions and selections .As

Baroni reflects: A manager will always say; 'the directors are the problem'. You do not have the same control on a director as you do a player. The club [its board] must have the same vision if they are pulling in a different way failure is likely. The fragmentation of a Club can complicate the Head Coach's job enormously; in what industry we might ask is the young aspirants to the top table tasked to someone else in a separate location from the first team? One can add to this the defensiveness of those whose remit is to develop youth –they at times do not want their protégés to leave their care. Some situations in elite level football defy logic and some situations do not have a resolution merely evoking questions that remain unanswered.

As Baroni explains: FZ On one occasion the Board asked me to include five players from the U-21s. I thought the Academy would send me the best but in fact they sent the worst! They [the Directors] then went themselves and chose the best but when asked about the best player were told he was injured. I wanted goalposts at the first team training ground and asked for one from the Academy facility. It never arrived even after 6 months. We have to make do with what they give us so we asked; what was/is the use of having the Academy?

Comfort of sorts can be sought from those close to him but ultimately blame or glory lies with him. Experience in football's ranking system is crucial in such moments: I take notes during first half and at half- time give players 5 mins to calm down before stating 3 or 4 key points .During the game I'll consult with my assistant coach but ultimately I make the decisions. Sometimes we disagree but we find a compromise .I was once an Assistant Coach so I know how difficult it can be. It's very important to both me and the other staff that the two of us are together.

Leadership is therefore learned over time; maturity in strategy ideally follows .Mistakes are learning curves and progress is a combination of both self-awareness and an awareness as to what might be best for those the Coach is charged with developing. Ideally the Head Coach is the height of professionalism: As your career progresses you learn from experience how to deal with situations better. You have to be intelligent enough to see what is good and what is bad for you and the team. Conflicts are quite frequent and can arise from many circumstances. . I think you have to protect your players at all times and be an example for them. The potential for all-outs in football clubs are legion. As such leadership strategies have to be learned (often from experience) and delivered (utilising different strategies). At times the Head Coach need resolve the situation on a one-to-one basis. However football squads being what they is the private resolution often needed to be conveyed to the collective? The pedagogy evident in such processes is at times reflective of young men who are self –obsessed and carrying a too

high opinion of their ability. A strategy is therefore required: I would speak to the player privately and tell him what I felt. Later I might explain the situation in front of the entire team. If a player is late I tell him not to be again as this will lead to others seeing such time keeping as acceptable. Most players have high self-esteem but zero percent sense of self-criticism; nothing is ever their fault!

The well-intentioned but deluded also require leadership strategies. In turn the qualities evidenced by players are not always universally acknowledged. The talent so obvious in the eyes of one man is not visible to the more discerning eyes of the Head Coach. Both are singing from the same hymn sheet and both are working for the good of the same club. In such situations how does the Coach let a colleague down gently? One example was when the Technical Director told me that this one particular player was good and I should include him. I didn't waste energy telling him that the player was no good and his opinion was poor thereby creating bad feeling. Instead I said: 'Yes, I noticed! I will keep an eye on him' and 'The time will come for that player'.

Perhaps the most important-if under-explored of strategies a contemporary Head Coach has to learn revolves around dealing with the media. As Baroni explains: The media want controversy, if you don't give them something to write about they're unhappy and become disinterested in you, I collected the most points in Serie B last season but the media don't like me. They understand what I am saying but do not always understand what I am trying to achieve. I do not attack other coaches so I don't make headlines- I am not giving the media what they want. That said it's important to be a gentleman and smile and let them think that you like them. There are enough pressures in the game -the media is one of them- they can help get you get a job but can also help lose you lose one...

The Head Coach in Italy will always be the scapegoat if the club are under-performing. Those employed in such a role know this and focus on results so as to keep their job. Having a close group of good players and good communication may bring success for a short period but long-term planning and development is difficult because the Head Coach has very little ownership of anything at the club. So, why do it? The answer is....You get a chance to bring people together and build something - if you are successful. If it fails you try to learn what were the reasons and next time try to do it better. Being a manager means you have control of something, it's a test of character and when it works it's a fantastic feeling; winning is infectious and you want more!

3.3 Winning, Planning and Creating: Howard Wilkinson

A vast and varied career in the English has produced a man in his early seventies who can say he has seen it all from grass-roots to International tournaments and everything in between.

Wilkinson's reflections on management are informed in part in his latter roles of appointing managers and acting as the spokesman for their 'trade' association also known as the League Managers Association. Immersed for some 50 years now in football managing and managerial issues Wilkinson can state without ambiguity what the primary role of such an individual is :A Football Chairman looks for one thing in a manager - someone who wins matches and is not necessarily worried how that is achieved. We [managers] are all judged on these criteria no matter what vision the Chairman has for the club. The manager may carry a philosophy around how to deliver and how he wants his team to perform usually learned from his a playing career and from previous managerial employment , but according to Wilkinson this has to be moderated by the reality that he is employed and answerable to a more senior club figure by: That person has to be on a joint journey with the Chair. I would not want to hire say a Project Manager and then say; 'There's your team get on with it ' .I would want him to understand the bigger picture .He would be a 'visionary'- like me- but he needs to present a construct to make his dream a reality. A manager should the embody the values and beliefs the chairman holds but if he can't go along with that he cannot impose his own ideas on a club.

According to Wilkinson there is no single personal quality that defines the successful football manager. There are however a few characteristics that help the working environment: You can survive in management without being a 'people's person' but you can get much more out of it if you are. Neither is there an ideal type player that Wilkinson sought out in the course of his managerial career: I wanted people who considered they work with me not for me .This relationship works better long term. I don't want a mercenary player who he says he gets paid if we win or lose like I do .I would want that everyone at the club had a value and felt that their contribution was valued. Great football teams were made by managers and were a product of recruitment and selection. There was no magic formula as to how players were sought and how they gelled as a team. There was however recognition that the manager whilst the vital cog in the wheel had to realize that he was only part of the machine, as Wilkinson explains: Great leadership demands that you have great people around you and in some respects greater people than you. You need feedback; you need to be challenged by people who have ideas-innovators.

The job of football management was learned by a combination of mistakes, fortunate breaks and the sense of cease the day. As Wilkinson explains of his managerial beginnings:

I was player /manager when I got a call from the chairman; next day I was in charge. I always wanted to be a Coach but I did not see this coming. The circumstances were assisted by Wilkinson never being part of what might best be called the 'locker room culture', as he explains this was both strength and potentially a weakness: The day before I was part of the team, next day I was responsible for the team..... All clubs have dressing room banter but I never liked to get involved with that. I now had to put my ideas forward to players I had played with. I would be vulnerable because they knew me. When a manager takes over there's generally a positive reaction but players are watching and listening trying to work out who you are and are they what you want them to be. I thought a lot about what the questions are likely to be -and the best answers. Consequently for many years not only would I prepare my work but would also anticipate what will be the questions they might ask? Which required me to think: What would I ask and how would I answer it?

Management for Wilkinson must always be considered as a task that plays out beyond the training ground and the inner circle that is the first team playing squad. The expectations of football management were not known to him but learned on the job: When I took my first job I wasn't sure if I expected anything! I had not given it a lot of thought -I just thought I'd like to be a Manager! It was practical things that always surprised me, for example laundry. In my first day at Leeds [United] the Head of Laundry came in asked for two new machines -imagine that today! But there were many other issues that landed in the manager's lap that were not part of the job description. As Wilkinson reflects: I believe anything that's effects the dressing room or team performance must have my authorisation. You must wear the hat – of variously; the technician, the manager and the leader. Management is organizational skills. Someone will ask you about the travel arrangements I would prefer to have a man in place who could tell me 'these are the possibilities' and I can choose one of them. Good back-room staff help off –load these burdens by filtering.

Unfortunately what people say about a manager cannot be controlled nor necessarily filtered. It can however be considered part of a strategy. As Wilkinson explains: Today's media is huge and very influential. Media awareness is critical for both the club and the manager. He must deal with it as well as he does preparing his players and staff for a game. But any form of planning takes time and time is not something many managers are allowed in this day and age.

So how did Wilkinson stay around so long? Moving into a football club the more you know the better. I was lucky in all my jobs except one. I moved out of my job with the Football Association and went to Sunderland without giving it as much thought as I had done with other employments. I paid for that because what I could do in other jobs I was unable to do there. You have to look at what's there, what they have been doing. Then you have to make a decision as to what way you will play taking into account, what sort of opposition you play against and the strengths of your players.

Strategy requires some *a priori* knowledge gleaned from the football grapevine. It also required very quick decisions to be made about the staff the manager inherits upon joining a new club. This requires calculation and negotiation as opposed to a clean sweep of all that was there before and a consideration that the manager's strategy has to accommodate a wider strategy: If in a club there was a long term strategy then I wouldn't want to change it. Then you have to find out if the staff you inherit can do the job you want them to do. If that is the case there's no need for wholesale change. to lose people just for the sake of it is not right. If I were the Chairman I would need the person coming in to satisfy me why the ones already in place cannot do the job. Ideally as a Chairman you would build the club so people are not indispensable.

The knowledge that informs both leadership and strategy is partly found in the game and partly a product of an inquiring mind. As the former school teacher explains: You have to be thirsty for knowledge outside of the field of operation. You have to seek out the best practice you think can be applied to the football world. Copying the highest form of genius is something you have to do, if you don't have a look at what others are doing right then you are a fool. Wilkinson's long-term strategy focused around youth development and Academy players came to its realization-eventually and with good fortune: I started with a vision, a long-term plan and was lucky enough to make a success having the time to work and improve on it. I managed Notts County for 3 1/2 years Sheffield Wednesday for 5 1/2 Leeds United for 8. It wasn't like building a wall but laying a road and putting the stones in place. You were always looking forward but you could also look back and see how you left a mark. The time Wilkinson was afforded meant he got it right and won the league and nearly made the Champions League final. Such success was not by chance but part of a long-term strategy combined with fortunate timing: I think we did the right thing at the right time.

My model started in Sheffield but was realised at Leeds where I put players in a shared Academy residence and they went to school together. When Leeds got to the Champions League semi-final there were 8/9 boys on that team sheet from the Academy. They were

not all English, two were Irish and one was Australian but I took great pleasure from afar in seeing a living example of what we had done.

The 50 years of experience that Wilkinson now wears has taught him that much of football but does not lend itself to the more rational world of business and its attendant accountability to shareholders: In a dream world you would run university courses on how to build football clubs. A lot of club owners are successful businessmen and you would think that a football club is not that much different from appointing staff in their own businesses. Like in all jobs you draw up a profile of the jobs demands profile and seek out people who match those criteria. If a club sees three managerial changes in a season, five in two seasons and ten in four years it indicates that the person choosing is choosing wrongly. If in an industry like Apple saw their CEO changed regularly what would happen to the share price?

The share price is not a major concern to many of those who fund the game at elite level. Clubs might seek a global brand status but so many today do not have anything approximating to an economic model. The one criterion all such clubs share is the need to stay in the division they find themselves in not least to enjoy the annual funding of the broadcasting monies of extra-terrestrial TV. If this is threatened the manager is the one who takes the blame: Before looking for a manager start looking at you first and maybe ask; what am I doing wrong? I am not optimistic this will happen ...the Manager is the easiest pressure point to release, he is on the pedestal and it is easier to get rid of him when the people start making it difficult for you.

3.4 Timing, Talking and Travelling: Roberto Martinez

Personable and ever-polite and willing to engage with the media Roberto Martinez was universally considered on the 'Good Guys' of the English game throughout his time managing at Swansea, Wigan Athletic and Everton. His teams played attractive football and he was permissive in allowing flair players to do their thing. The trajectory of Martinez to the EPL came when he managed the relatively small enterprise that was – and remains-Wigan Athletic. Their rise to glory is one of the great stories of the EPL and was down to both the monies invested in the club by home town millionaire Dave Whelan and the managerial abilities of Martinez. It was widely assumed because of his achievements at Wigan that it was only ever a matter of time before Martinez would be offered a bigger stage to pit his wits against the managers of the bigger. This came and went when his tenure at Everton ended in 2016 and at the time of the interview in mid-2016 Martinez was managing Belgium widely considered one of Europe's best national team squads.

He was doing something right, quite what that was he was not able to articulate on beyond the notion that effort brings its own rewards stating : In football if the ball hits the back of the net then what you are doing is right! Anytime you put effort into something things will happen .Without efforts don't expect anything. An effort that Martinez had over both Baroni and Wilkinson centred on language. This required a leadership strategy not least because English was Martinez's third language and his squad spoke eleven Mother tongues; how does a manager deal with this scenario? It is very important to communicate especially with a multicultural dressing room. At Wigan the squad were drawn from 18 nationalities but we managed to win the FA Cup. We managed to create a very clear identity We would have one common language in group occasions but on my own with individuals I would – if I could -speak their native language and I found I got much more fruitful.

The need to find some form of shared identity in such a disparate collection of individuals was a task that required subtle leadership. As Martinez explains: It can be difficult to find a common ground to work as a team. You need to find that common ground and at the same time enough flexibility against different opposition. The common ground was a task primarily of the Manager but relied on those he appointed to be his inner circle. The purpose was to pass on footballing intelligence but such information needed to be tempered by both timing and occasion and knowledge of the individual personality: The Coach affects the player on the training pitch how depends on what information you give the layer physically and mental. During the week Monday to Friday I manage the human being, Saturday I manage the player. If I leave out/drop a player I must talk to him?

Clear demarcations as to who did what defined Martinez's strategy. Considering himself as a Manager he had others do the daily training sessions but his input was crucial; The Manager is responsible for assembling the squad. A Manager will get people around him and they will do lower level managing for him. We would meet two hours before training and discuss details. This required the Manager to make decisions; he needed those he could trust to do that which he wanted. This relationship was not static and ideally included someone with long standing 'local knowledge: The relationship a manager requires with coaching staff has changed a lot over the past decade. When moving into a new club I like to keep someone already on the coaching staff who has a close relationship with the club structure.

New opportunities in football bring timeless expectation. The leadership and strategy thus is already decided in the abstract. The problem is how to make what every club Boardroom realizable: When you are a manger it's like opening a book. The first page tells you that you are expected to win the league, work with a \$200m budget, produce

players and play attractive football. You have also to control the budget and set a philosophy for overseeing all player age -groups in the club. Collectively this informs decision- making around buying and selling players and how you use the clubs money. Strategy is decided in many cases by those appointing the Manger/Head Coach. Despite Managerial talk of 'developing' players the clubs want trophies and they are not always bothered about the shape success takes. The manager has to decide where the line is between doing things his way and accommodating the needs of the employer: Every club has objectives and they expect you to achieve them. You may improve a player and the team but the Board also expects you to win the league. The board may want you to change the style of play. You need to understand and accept it or decide 'that's not for me'. The Belgium Federation's expectation of me at the moment is simple; use the talent we have and get them to work together..

Departure –usually by dismissal- is an inevitable part of Management. The onus for Martinez is on the ability to communicate. If this aspects of both leadership and strategy is not working nothing can be done: As a coach/ manager it is your responsibility to give information to players but the key is when and how and who you give it to. If the end product is not successful ask yourself; should I have given that information? And did the man you gave it to know how to use it? Maybe you shouldn't have given it to him. The coach says 'I told them all week they were going to do this' but if he lost the game the coach take the blame; he did not effect that information in an effective way or well enough. Losing a job should be accepted as normal and a strategy is in place for getting over this juncture. A philosophical 'take ' on the Managers career is essential as is support away from the game:Set-backs as part of the journey, without them we won't improve .You need to find how you can cope with a set- back. Maybe it's time with your family, maybe some form of physical activity or locking yourself away- but you need to find a way to cope.

4 Conclusions and Recommendations.

The research conducted on leadership in the business and academic world obviously has some relevance to the world of football. That said no theory is strictly transferable because as the above accounts have revealed the respective elite football cultures do

not provide for a one-size-fits all approach to be taught or pursued. Different Football Associations, League systems, club cultures, boards of directors and working arrangements require at best tweaks and at worst major adjustments to be made for anything approximating to a coherent leadership strategy for football management. This makes it difficult to judge what constitutes 'good' or 'bad' leadership as the bottom line for such a criteria is results on the pitch and league position. This makes modern football a race to the bottom. The league table becomes an inescapable and tangible judgement; either you succeed or you fail. Thus the game is unfair to those who take the responsibility of managing as success has many fathers but failure is usually attributed to the individual. And such individuals whilst nearly all coming through the ranks and learning to receive commands before commanding are not sure whether they were born or made to be what they are or were. Neither can they really distinguish between what in their qualities and abilities was a product of some sense of inherent personality as opposed to something learned in their footballing upbringing. The interviews reveal that such men are pragmatic and have utilized leadership methods that fit the themes of Contingency, Transactional and Transformational. There is no one Personality Type and what constitutes Leadership and what constitutes 'Management' is confused. Any debate about Strategy suggests that the quality lends itself well to descriptions of ambitions but is a flexible quality in reality based in the perceptiveness and situational demands of the particular situations the Manager/Head Coach finds himself in.

The history of football is the story of great men both on the pitch and in the dug-out. The issues revealed by the interviews reveal the following themes that all Managers head Coaches need consider; the passion that the match day evokes requires a calm head and a willingness to both change strategy and listen to the ideas of close confidantes. Time is never on the side of the Manager/Head Coach. Style of Leadership is contingent on the nature of the players and the relationship with the Board. A Strategy is crucial to both convince the playing squad that you know what you are doing and to convince the Board that you have thought things through- even if it results suggest that strategy is not always working. A Manager/Head Coach has to make leadership decisions related to tactic and players which will inevitably bring him into conflict. He has to convince an often critical media that he knows what he is doing. He needs to be constantly aware of what the Club considers its Identity. His memory needs to be concise so as not to be contradictory and his delivery of instruction minimal, unequivocal and sensitive of the personalities receiving such messages.

4.1 Hearts, Minds and Memories

The interviews tell us a lot more. The contexts and club cultures of Italy are in some instances timeless and often resistant to changes. Football clubs generally are

conservative places that might speak of change but generally avoid anything too revolutionary. As Baroni reveals the coach in Italy does not seek to change the club system too much. Those appointed Head Coach have to accept there will be little or no help from others also employed in the club. In getting their way the head Coach may have to tolerate insubordination and speak diplomatically as opposed to truthfully. That the Youth Academy has little or no relationship with the first team is astounding, but part of a system that protects its interests possibly to the detriment of the success of the first team. The need to adapt is important; the best coaches manage to find solutions even if the issue is a surplus player already at the club, or one brought in by the club over the head of the Coach.

The perspectives of a man with over five decades in the English game reveals that the time allowed to develop a strategy can pay off. Success is most likely to appear when surrounded by good people who adds another criteria to the consideration, namely how can one teach a Manager/Head Coach the perceptions required to judge good staff and colleagues? The manager needs to sell himself to his imminent employer's and articulating a vision can be seductive but it needs to be accompanied by real-life scenarios that are deliverable. It also reveals that the Manager must be humble and realize that success is a joint enterprise, including the Board and the back-room staff. The same man must also realise that the playing squad are not blank canvases; many have years of experience and some will covet a future Managerial role. The questions arising from the players must be answered and even anticipated. The tasks that come the Managers way will at times have little to do with his job description or first team matters, but must be dealt with in the absence of any other authority figure willing or capable of doing so. Club histories and cultures should be known and the situation the Manager is inheriting should be researched.

Once in place, the ensuing footballing strategy is decided to a degree by the quality of the players and the abilities of the opposition. The crucial element of any strategy is the ability to accommodate the personnel –both players and back-room staff- inherited by the manager. Strategy is an attribute that must be sought outside of the immediate employment situation and Managers should seek inspiration from all walks of life. Ultimately, the business that is football does not lend itself to the employment criteria that other industries utilise and when things don't go as planned, the Manager, by virtue of his media profile, has to be the one that leaves.

In England, the perspective of a man versed in Spanish football reveals an ability to see the very simple requirements that all clubs ask of their Manager/Head Coach. In achieving this crucial criteria are the need to communicate and the fostering of a shared

identity amongst all concerned. This is achieved by the trilogy of; saying the right thing, at the right time informed by knowledge of the individual being spoken to. Crucially Martinez accepts that the Managers' aims and ambitions (Leadership and Strategies) have at times to come second –or to be toned down- when that he terms 'club culture' frustrate them. When the employer calls time on the career of the Manager the strategy must be to learn from the situation, whilst maintaining a sense of perspective from outside of the game.

4.2 Learning Outcomes

Collectively, the experiences of all three interviews teach us that change requires a great deal of communication and sometimes confrontation. This expends a lot of energy and might affect both the coaching and managing of the players. The words 'Trust' and 'Respect' are frequently mentioned; but how is Trust evident in reality and when is it most likely to be challenged or lost? The human qualities that provide for Respect is everything in football management; if an individual does not have-or loses this- he cannot create the appropriate working environment to succeed.

But can the position of Manager/Head Coach be improved and the appalling statistics around their dismissals is changed? Pre contract agreement with clubs that requires the latter to strictly specify roles and tasks and avoid uncertainty should be encouraged. Prospective managers might even be pro-active in this regard and itemise their strategy and leadership principles. If the club subsequently employs that individual then they have implicitly bought into the vision he sought and have no right to dismiss that which they wanted.

The problem in the past, however, is the changing nature of the working environment in elite level football (and indeed business in general) which has shifted debate around what constitutes an 'effective' leader. Where there was once occupational stability and longevity of employees, today employees oscillate between different professions; organisational loyalty is on the wane. It is very rare for employees to work at one company for the duration of their working lives. Likewise, whereas decades ago leaders often favoured a 'command and control' approach, there is now a far more democratic, or participative approach to leadership. Today it is what is known as emotional intelligence, or the ability to 'read' people, empathise with them and adapt to their varying expectations that in many working contexts, constitutes desirable leadership skills (Goffee and Jones 2006). In many instances, football managers and coaches must strive not just to command, but also to connect with players, ensuring that they feel motivated and loyal during their employment. As Grout and Fisher (2011: 37) assert: "Leadership

used to be about control but today it is about people – finding the best, giving them the resources and direction they need and encouraging them to do their best”. These are fine words, but people still want hard answers as to what makes for success.

The increasing interest in football Coaching is such that it now attracts academic debate .Successful managers are invited to address business leaders at Harvard University. Such Management is however always more than an exercise in people management .The curiosity and intellectualism afforded to such leaders and strategists reflect the drastic shift in their leadership styles from the purely autocratic and command-style approach, to the more adaptable and balanced approach of the contingency style. As Pep Guardiola, the one-time Barcelona and Spain player and former manager of Barcelona, Bayern Munich and current manager of Manchester City stated "I am not dealing with footballers, I am dealing with people. They have fears and worry about failing and making fools of themselves in front of 80,000 people. I have to make them see that without each other they are nothing." (Cited in Jenson 2011).

The current longest serving manager in the English game, the most successful coach in the NFL and the Head Coach of both the European Champions and World Cup winning national side offer words on which to reflect. The Arsenal manager, Arsene Wenger, argues that the fundamentals of a successful football manager remain the same as when he first took control of Arsenal some 20 years ago: “the key ingredients will always be the passion an individual has for the sport; man-management, the ability to evolve and adapt; and of course, an eye for talent” (cited in Calvin 2015). Many would argue that such qualities and abilities are impossible to teach. Just maybe then, great Manager/Head Coaches whilst not born with the abilities itemised by Wenger, might equally state that not all their job demands can be taught or learned. Just maybe then, the winning Managerial/Head Coach formula is complicated; that which can be learned has to have a foundation on which to build. But what this foundation is and where it comes from is the mystery of football management. Just possibly, some individuals are special by virtue of a host of personal qualities they were born with –or did they develop this persona; was it imitation? Was it a product of their schooling and family? Was it a combination of their footballing careers and their later years of learning their trade as back room staff?

Even today, Managers and Head Coaches even today are able to thrive upon a ‘cult of personality’ established by the likes of Helenio Herrera – a coach who referred to himself as ‘The Saviour’, ‘The Wizard’ and ‘The Magician’, or Jose Mourinho who famously declared himself ‘The Special One’ at his first press conference as Chelsea manager. But in addition to their charisma, what made these two individuals special were an

unrelenting work ethic, in-depth tactical knowledge and years studying the game. They had an intangible aura about them but this was combined with years of study and single minded application to their task. To borrow the words of the NFL's most lauded Coach Vince Lombardi; *"Leaders aren't born, they are made. And they are made just like anything else, through hard work. And that's the price we'll have to pay to achieve that goal, or any goal."* (Cited in Kruse 2012).

The price does not need anger, or brutality, or a disregard for people. The Spanish national team head-coach and World Cup winner, Vincent Del Bosque, was an individual who evidenced a 'soft power' leadership strategy and argued that: *"Leadership must be likeable, affable, cordial, and above all emotional. The fashion of authoritarian leadership is gone. Football is about life. You can't be angry all day."* (Cited in Walker 2016)

5 Bibliography

Armanini, G. (2016). *Esoneri in Serie A, altro che progetti: gli allenatori durano solo 9 mesi*. Calcio Finanza. Retrieved 1 November, 2016,

<http://www.calcioefinanza.it/2016/03/29/esoneri-in-serie-a-durata-media-allenatori/>

<http://www.calcioefinanza.it/2016/03/29/esoneri-in-serie-a-durata-media-allenatori/>

Ancelotti, C., Brady, C. and Forde, M. (2016). *Carlo Ancelotti Quiet Leadership: Winning Hearts, Minds and Matches*. London: Penguin Books

Balague, G. (2016). The myth about Spanish & English coaching: Nobody is perfect.

Yahoo. Retrieved 11 November, 2016, <https://uk.sports.yahoo.com/news/myth-spanish-coaching-nobody-perfect-120103615.html>

Bass, B. M. (1981). *Stodgill's handbook of leadership: A survey of theory and research*. New York: Free Press.

Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectation*. New York: Free Press.

Bennis, W. (1999). *Managing People is Like Herding Cats*. NY: Executive Excellence Publishing

Berry, S. (2012). *Successful Strategy In A Week*. London: Hodder Education

Breazeale, D. (1997). *Nietzsche: Untimely Meditations* (Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Burns, J.M. (1978) *Leadership*. New York. Harper & Row.

Calvin, M. (2015). *Living on the Volcano: The Secrets of Surviving as a Football Manager*. London: Century

Carlyle, T. (2013). *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*, Yale: Yale University Press.

Coles, R. (2015). *Head Coach vs. Manager – an unnecessary trend?* Retrieved 31 October, 2016,

<https://offsiderulepodcast.com/2015/02/04/head-coach-vs-manager-an-unnecessary-trend/>

Colombo, M. (2016). *Capello: "Berlusconi voleva fare la formazione, ma alla fine decidevo io"*. Corriere della Sera. Retrieved 30 October, 2016,

http://www.corriere.it/sport/16_agosto_06/capello-berlusconi-voleva-fare-formazione-ma-fine-decidevo-io-9f1af33e-5b3f-11e6-bfed-33aa6b5e1635.shtml

Ferguson, A. and Hayward, P. (2013). *Alex Ferguson: My Autobiography*. UK: Hodder & Stoughton

Fieldsend, D. (Forthcoming: 2017). *The European Game*. Scotland: Sport Arena [Birlinn Ltd].

Fisher, A. (2016). *Zidane: I will get sacked eventually*. *Goal*. Retrieved 11 November, 2016, <http://www.goal.com/en-gb/news/3277/la-liga/2016/10/06/28233882/zidane-i-will-get-sacked-eventually>

Foot, J. (2007). *Calcio: A History of Italian football*. London & NY: Harper Perennial

Goffee, R. and Jones, G. (2006). *Why Should Anyone Be Led By You?: What It Takes To Be An Authentic Leader*. Boston: Harvard Business School

Grout, J. and Fisher, L. (2011). *What you Need to Know About Leadership*. UK: Capstone Publishing Ltd.

Harris, N. (2015). 'Premier League managers' life expectancy: Arsene Wenger still going strong, but average is down to less than two years'. *Mail Online*. Retrieved 1 November, 2016,

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/football/article-3262584/Premier-League-managers-life-expectancy-Arsene-Wenger-going-strong-average-two-years.html>

Hersey, P., & Blanchard, K. (1988). *Management of organizational behavior*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Jenson, P. (2011). *The Tale of How Guardiola and Barcelona Fell in Love*. *The Independent*. Retrieved 11 November, 2016,

<http://www.independent.co.uk/sport/football/european/the-tale-of-how-guardiola-and-barcelona-fell-in-love-2288941.html>

Kruse, K. (2012). *100 Best Quotes on Leadership*, *Forbes*. Retrieved 13 October, 2016,

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/kevinkruse/2012/10/16/quotes-on-leadership/#2cc3a3ee7106>

Kruse, K. (2013). *What is Leadership?* *Forbes*. Retrieved 13 October, 2016,

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/kevinkruse/2013/04/09/what-is-leadership/#63f6533e713e>

Lewin, K., Lippitt, R. and White, R.K. (1939). "Patterns of aggressive behaviour in Experimentally created social climates". *Journal of Social Psychology*, 10, pp. 271-301.

McKeown, M. (2015). *The Strategy Book: How to Think and Act Strategically to Deliver Outstanding Results*. London & NY: Financial Times Publishing .

Steinberg, J. (2016). *Football League Managers Left High and Dry by Need for Instant Results*. *The Guardian*. Retrieved 11 November, 2016,

<https://www.theguardian.com/football/football-league-blog/2016/mar/25/football-league-manager-sackings-lma-report>

Walker, J. (2016). *The Best Ever Coaches: Vincent Del Bosque*. UEFA. Retrieved 1 November, 2016, <http://www.uefa.com/uefachampionsleague/news/newsid=2328505.html>