

What Can Executives and Lawyers Learn from a Kids' Soccer Team?

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It started more than 20 years ago, when Bob Singer's daughter was seven years old. Her soccer team needed a parent to step up and volunteer to coach. Bob Singer didn't know much about the game at the time, but he was glad to help out.

Thus began Bob's involvement in the sport he now says without reservation is one of his true passions. The one-time novice went on to coach three state championship youth teams, and he still plays three times a week on adult teams. He has contributed in off-the-field roles as well, serving several stints as president and director for local and state youth soccer organizations. He is currently the regional director for 12 southern states and a member of the board of U.S. Youth Soccer. In 2009, he was inducted into the Greensboro Youth Soccer Association Hall of Fame.

Bob will tell you that practicing law is what he does for a living; soccer and coaching are what he loves. In reality, though, he approaches his profession and his passion in much the same way. He says the constant drive for excellence he preached for two decades as a coach serves him well in his practice focusing on banking, mergers and acquisitions, venture capital transactions, securities offerings and corporate matters.

"Business and sports are alike in the sense that the people you deal with are for the most part very passionate and competitive about what they're doing," Bob observes. "Business executives share a common motivation with coaches, players and administrators in soccer—they want to excel. So the philosophy I use to help our law firm clients succeed is the same as the fundamental idea I try to instill in the teams I coach. In fact, it's the same principle my mentors at Brooks Pierce taught me 30 years ago: If you work to achieve excellence in what you do, winning will follow."