

# ALL IT TAKES

## IS ALL YOU'VE GOT

I was appalled when every player on my son's baseball team received a trophy . . . for second place. Regardless of the message society sends kids by rewarding everyone, let's face it: there are winners. And, by default, there are losers. Just because there isn't always a scoreboard (and that's another story!) doesn't mean someone isn't always keeping score. Ask my eight-year-old son, he'll tell you. As we get older, it's a whole new ballgame. Unless you are talented enough to make it to the bigs, the game shifts from one on the field to one in the corner office. Or the cubicle. Or the warehouse. Or the truck. In this game of life, the metric that ultimately determines success—and happiness—is 110%.

The ballpark figure 110 refers to the percentage of effort. It refers to your personal best. No matter your choices in life or work or family, everyone has the opportunity to play extra innings. Does that mean you will hit a home run every time? Probably not. But if stepping up to the plate is half the battle, giving 110% will surely help your statistical probability.

**Definition.** Much like batting averages, goals are individualistic. So is success, and ultimately, happiness. And, in the end, success should equate to happiness. In fact, the very thing for which one person strives for isn't necessarily the same for another. The lead-off batter wants a high on-base percentage while RBIs are more important to the clean-up hitter. So how can there be a level playing field to determine success when everyone has a different goal or definition of success? It's impossible to have it all. It just is; pitchers don't typically hit for power (or at all) because that is not their expertise. So the brand new ball game is about figuring out what you want and going after it with 110% effort, persistence, and perseverance.

**Prioritization and Organization.** No matter your definition of success, you have to be in the starting lineup. Right off the bat, the proper equipment is a necessity. And, you can't hit without a . . . well, bat. So do you need education? Or is experience more important? After you strategize your game plan, organize your steps and action items within each step to reach your goals. Small successes add up to big ones. While it's natural to want to swing for the fences, a couple of base hits are easier to obtain. They'll also give you confidence and help keep the momentum in your favor. Beware of the curve ball, though . . .

**Reassess.** Sometimes life doesn't go according to plan. Sometimes needs change. Sometimes wants change. That's why we have pitching changes and Plan Bs. And, sometimes, life events come out of left field, causing you to hold up at third. Reassessing your strategy, your goals, your definition of success, and your idea of happiness helps you cover your bases. It's important to call time out every now and then to make sure you're still in the lead.

We hear a lot about giving it your all and playing like a champion. Perhaps passion and persistence does pay. By giving 110% effort, you are giving your personal best. Every. Single. Time. Can you really ask for or expect more than that? Win or lose, that's individualistic success. With that approach, happiness is surely on deck. Batter up!