

Vince Lombardi Speaks

Vince Lombardi was more than a football coach, he had a philosophy of life that he deeply believed and lived. So did his teams. So do a lot of winners. One study found that among highly effective managers, Lombardi quotations were found more often on their walls than sayings from any other single source.

In his first season as head coach in 1959, Lombardi lifted the previous no-win Packers to a 7-5 record and was unanimously voted Coach of the Year. In 1960, the Packers captured the Western Division title and went on to win World Championships in 1961, 1962, 1965, 1966 and 1967. Never finishing lower than second since 1960, his teams became the standard of football excellence. Over a nine-year span as head coach, Lombardi's teams racked up a remarkable .758 winning percentage. Even more noteworthy, however, is the record of Lombardi's teams in postseason play. In 10 division playoffs and World Championship games, the Packers emerged victorious nine times. For many, his spirit represented a universal standard of human excellence

Quotes by Lombardi

- "There's only one way to succeed in anything, and that is to give it everything. I do, and I demand that my players do."
- "If you aren't fired with *enthusiasm*, you'll be *fired* with enthusiasm."
- "Mental toughness is essential to success."
- "You never win a game unless you beat the guy in front of you. The score on the board doesn't mean a thing. That's for the fans. You've got to win the war with the man in front of you. You've got to get your man."
- "To achieve success, whatever the job we have, we must pay a price."
- "Success is like anything worthwhile. It has a price. You have to pay the price to win and you have to pay the price to get to the point where success is possible. Most important, you must pay the price to stay there."
- "Football is a great deal like life in that it teaches that work, sacrifice, perseverance, competitive drive, selflessness and respect for authority is the price each and every one of us must pay to achieve any goal that is worthwhile."
- "Once you agree upon the price you and your family must pay for success, it enables you to ignore the minor hurts, the opponent's pressure, and the temporary failures."



- "Confidence is contagious and so is lack of confidence, and a customer will recognize both."
- "If you believe in yourself and have the courage, the determination, the dedication, the competitive drive and if you are willing to sacrifice the little things in life and pay the price for the things that are worthwhile, it can be done."
- "Unless a man believes in himself and makes a total commitment to his career and puts everything he has into it—his mind, his body and his heart—what is life worth to him? If I were a salesman, I would make this commitment to my company, to the product and most of all, to myself."
- "The quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavor."
- "Once a man has made a commitment to a way of life, he puts the greatest strength in the world behind him. It's something we call heart power. Once a man has made this commitment, nothing will stop him short of success."
- "Unless a man believes in himself and makes a total commitment to his career and puts everything he has into it—his mind, his body, his heart—what's life worth to him."
- "It is essential to understand that battles are primarily won in the hearts of men."
- "In great attempts, it is glorious even to fail."
- "They may not love you at the time, but they will later."
- " Leadership rests not only upon ability, not only upon capacity; having the capacity to lead is not enough. The leader must be willing to use it. His leadership is then based on truth and character. There must be truth in the purpose and will power in the character."
- "Leadership is based on a spiritual quality; the power to inspire, the power to inspire others to follow."
- "Having the capacity to lead is not enough. The leader must be willing to use it."
- "A leader must identify himself with the group, must back up the group, even at the risk of displeasing superiors. He must believe that the group wants from him a sense of approval. If this feeling prevails, production, discipline, morale will be high, and in return, you can demand the cooperation to promote the goals of the company."



- "Leaders are made, they are not born. They are made by hard effort, which is the price which all of us must pay to achieve any goal that is worthwhile."
- "They call it coaching but it is teaching. You do not just tell them...you show them the reasons."
- "The harder you work, the harder it is to surrender."
- "The difference between a successful person and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather in a lack of will."
- "The spirit, the will to win and the will to excel—these are the things that endure and these are the qualities that are so much more important than any of the events that occasion them."
- "It is essential to understand that battles are primarily won in the hearts of men. Men respond to leadership in a most remarkable way and once you have won his heart, he will follow you anywhere."
- "A man can be as great as he wants to be. If you believe in yourself and have the courage, the determination, the dedication, the competitive drive and if you are willing to sacrifice the little things in life and pay the price for the things that are worthwhile, it can be done."
- "If you'll not settle for anything less than your best, you will be amazed at what you can accomplish in your lives."
- "It's not whether you get knocked down, it's whether you get up."
- "I've never known a man worth his salt who in the long run, deep down in his heart, didn't appreciate the grind, the discipline. There is something good in men that really yearns for discipline."
- "The good Lord gave you a body that can stand most anything. It's your mind you have to convince."
- "Mental toughness is many things and rather difficult to explain. Its qualities are sacrifice and self—denial. Also, most importantly, it is combined with a perfectly disciplined will that refuses to give in. It's a state of mind—you could call it character in action."
- "Once you learn to quit, it becomes a habit."
- "Individual commitment to a group effort—that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work."



- "Teams do not go physically flat, they go mentally stale."
- "Teamwork is what the Green Bay Packers were all about. They didn't do it for individual glory. They did it because they loved one another."
- "People who work together will win, whether it be against complex football defenses, or the problems of modern society."
- "The achievements of an organization are the results of the combined effort of each individual."
- "Success demands singleness of purpose."
- "Some of us will do our jobs well and some will not, but we will be judged by only one thing—the result."
- "Winning is not a sometime thing: it's an all the time thing. You don't win once in a while; you don't do the right thing once in a while; you do them right all the time. Winning is a habit. Unfortunately, so is losing."
- "Winning is not everything—but making effort to win is."
- "It's easy to have faith in yourself and have discipline when you're a winner, when you're number one. What you've got to have is faith and discipline when you're not yet a winner."
- "I firmly believe that any man's finest hour, the greatest fulfillment of all that he holds dear, is the moment when he has worked his heart out in a good cause and lies exhausted on the field of battle—victorious."

Quotes About Lombardi

- "When Lombardi said 'sit down' we didn't look for a chair."—Forrest Gregg
- "It was a helluva performance to listen to when he'd go out there and get his troops around him. He laughed. He cried. He motivated. I think he could motivate almost anybody to do almost anything. He communicated with human emotions."—Chuck Lane
- "He made us realize that if the mind was willing, the body can go." —Forrest Gregg
- "He made you a believer. He told you what the other team was going to do, and he told you what you had to do to beat them, and invariably he was right."—Willie Davis



- "He made us all better than we thought we could be."—Jerry Kramer
- "He pushed you to the end of your endurance and then beyond it. And if there was reserve there, well he found that too."—Henry Jordan
- "All he wanted from you was perfection."—Jim Taylor
- "Coach Lombardi showed me that by working hard and using my mind, I could overcome my weakness to the point where I could be one of the best."—Bart Starr
- "He prepared us so well, and he motivated us so well, I felt he was a part of me on the field."—Fuzzy Thurston
- "His enthusiasm, his spirit, was infectious."—Frank Gifford
- "Respect wasn't a one way street with him. He demanded it of others but he also gave it."—Pete Rozelle
- "The fear in my mind was not him but that for some reason I would not be a part of this team and be with this man."—Forrest Gregg
- "He was very much interested in the total man as far as his players were concerned. I know that he was very interested in the fact that guys be total citizens. In other words, that we may be the type of people, citizens the town would be proud of."—Carrol Duke
- "You might reduce Lombardi's coaching philosophy to a single sentence: In any game, you do the things you do best and you do them over and over and over."—George Halas

