



The Ford Leadership Framework

Executive Summary

When I first started coaching, I thought leadership was about helping teams win. Over time, I realised something far more important. Winning is an outcome.

Leadership is about creating environments where people discover what they can become.

Everything in this portfolio has been learned through experience - working with international teams, professional clubs, universities, businesses and communities.

These are not theories. They are lessons. Some were learned through success. Others through failure.

All have shaped the leader I have become.

I now want to pass on this experience to develop well-rounded, exceptional leaders of tomorrow across sport, academia and business.



1. People First: Create an environment where every individual knows they are at the centre of every decision. High performance begins with trust. People perform at their best when they know they are valued as individuals—not simply for what they produce, but for who they are. Every decision, whether tactical, technical, physical, mental or personal, starts with the individual.

Does every person know they matter?

2. Challenge to Improve: Create a culture where everyone helps each other become better. Growth requires challenge. Great environments normalise constructive feedback, curiosity and learning. Excellence is achieved when people are encouraged to stretch themselves and support others to do the same.

Who made someone better today?"

3. Accountability: Everybody owns the standard. Responsibility cannot sit with the leader alone. High-performing environments are built when every individual accepts ownership of their behaviour, preparation and contribution.

What am I responsible for today?

4. Consistently world-class performance is built through world-class habits: Excellence is rarely created by extraordinary effort. It comes from showing up every day

with discipline, professionalism and a commitment to continually raising standards.

What standard did I set today?

5. Honest Communication: Trust grows through honest conversations delivered with empathy. People deserve clarity. Feedback should be courageous enough to improve performance and respectful enough to strengthen relationships. Honest conversations build trust, not fear.

Have I said what needs to be said?

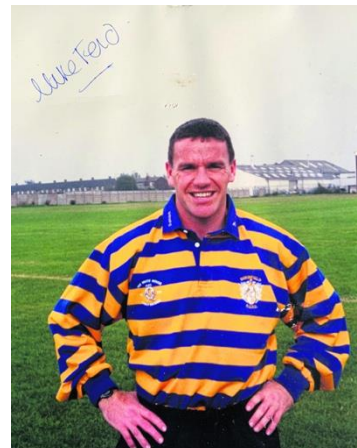
6. Team Before Self: Individual talent succeeds only when it serves the collective purpose. High-performing teams are united by shared ambition. People trust one another, believe in the plan and understand that lasting success is achieved together.

What does the team need from me?

7. Empowerment: The strongest organisations are led by people at every level. Leadership is not about creating followers. It is about developing confident people who think independently, make good decisions and take responsibility for the environment they help create.

Who did I empower today?

About, Honours & Legacy



Mike Ford has spent more than four decades leading high-performing environments across international rugby, elite sport, education and organisational leadership. His career has included senior leadership roles with England, Ireland, Bath Rugby, Toulon, Germany Rugby and Oldham RLFC, together with advisory work supporting organisations seeking sustainable high performance and cultural transformation. Throughout his career, he has become recognised not only for building successful teams, but for developing leaders, transforming cultures and leaving organisations stronger than he found them. His leadership philosophy is built on four enduring principles: **Belonging. Excellence. Developing Leaders. Legacy.**

Leadership Roles: Director of Rugby/Head Coach, Managing Director & Owner: Saracens, Bath, Toulon, Dallas, Leicester Tigers, Oldham and Bramley International Leadership: Ireland RU, England RU, British and Irish Lions, Germany and Belgium

Leadership Legacy: My sons George, Joe and Jacob, Kyle Eastmond, Jonathan Joseph, Anthony Watson, Neil Hatley, Toby Booth, Maurice Botha, Alex Sanderson, Sean Long, and others

Building Opportunity: Established player pathways; Created women's programmes; Built education partnerships; Developed community pathways

Honours: RWC Final 2007; Six Nations Champions; Triple Crown Winners; Premiership Director of Rugby winner 2015; Division one Champions RL 2024; 10 major Honours; England & Great Britain International; British & Irish captain 3 times.

Leadership is temporary. Legacy is permanent.



Contact Us

The Ford Leadership Framework: A philosophy of culture, leadership, and sustainable excellence proven across elite international sport and organizational growth.

Whether you are seeking executive coaching, strategic organisational advisory or leadership workshops, let's discuss how to leave your team stronger than you found it.

Contact me today to organise a Workshop:
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