



Lessons From the Field

Abby Wambach

Women's Soccer Legend, Best-Selling Author,
and Founder, Wolfpack Endeavor



As the highest-scoring international soccer player, Abby Wambach learned her fair share of lessons on the field. Now retired, she is sharing what she learned to teach leaders rules for changing the game. In her talk at Leadercast 2020—Ripple Effect, Abby thinks back to some of the most impactful leadership moments in her career to share four pieces of wisdom for leaders.

Key Takeaways

Make failure your fuel. Instead of viewing failures as setbacks, we should view them as opportunities. “Failure is fuel. Failure is an opportunity, and it is a muscle that needs to be built,” says Abby.

Know when to demand the ball. As leaders, we want to challenge and motivate those around us by pushing them in front of us. But there are times when we must take charge and demand the ball to get things done, says Abby. Know when to balance between the two.

Lead from the bench. What could have been one of the most devastating moments in Abby's life ended up being one of the best things to happen to her. Instead of wallowing in disappointment when she was benched for the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup, she became her team's biggest cheerleader and championed them from the bench. It doesn't matter

if you're on the field or on the sidelines—lead from wherever you are.

Find your pack. After Abby retired from soccer, running became unbearable for her. What changed? Now, she was running alone and didn't have her team there to push her and go through it together. Leaders should surround themselves with people who will run alongside them in a relentless pursuit of excellence.

“Doing hard things is better and feels less painful if you have other people who are experiencing it with you.”