

GRIDIRON LESSONS

Super Bowl coaches bring calm to the storm

Colts' Dungy and Bears' Smith seen as inspirational alternatives to screaming bosses

BY CAROL HYMOWITZ
WALL STREET JOURNAL STAFF

The Super Bowl should be required viewing for managers who think screaming at employees is the best way to motivate them — or simply their prerogative as bosses.

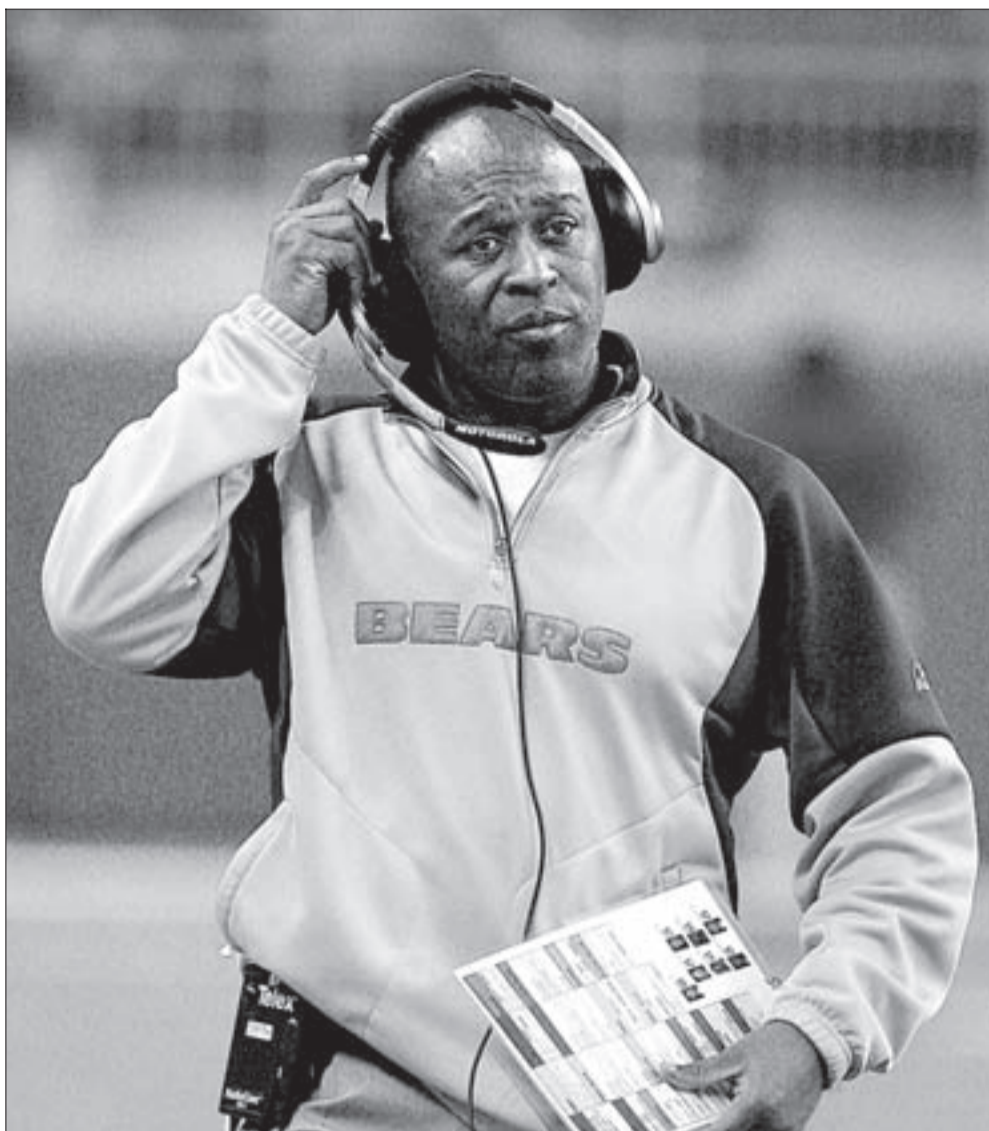
They won't see that kind of behaviour Sunday, as the Indianapolis Colts play the Chicago Bears for football's highest trophy. The Colts' head coach, Tony Dungy, and the Bears' Lovie Smith don't curse or sarcastically chew out players, which makes them stand out in the National Football League's scream-and-holler culture.

The two men — the first blacks to lead Super Bowl teams — became close friends when Mr. Dungy, formerly head coach for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, hired Mr. Smith as an assistant. Both believe they can get their teams to compete more fiercely and score more touchdowns by giving directives calmly and treating players with respect.

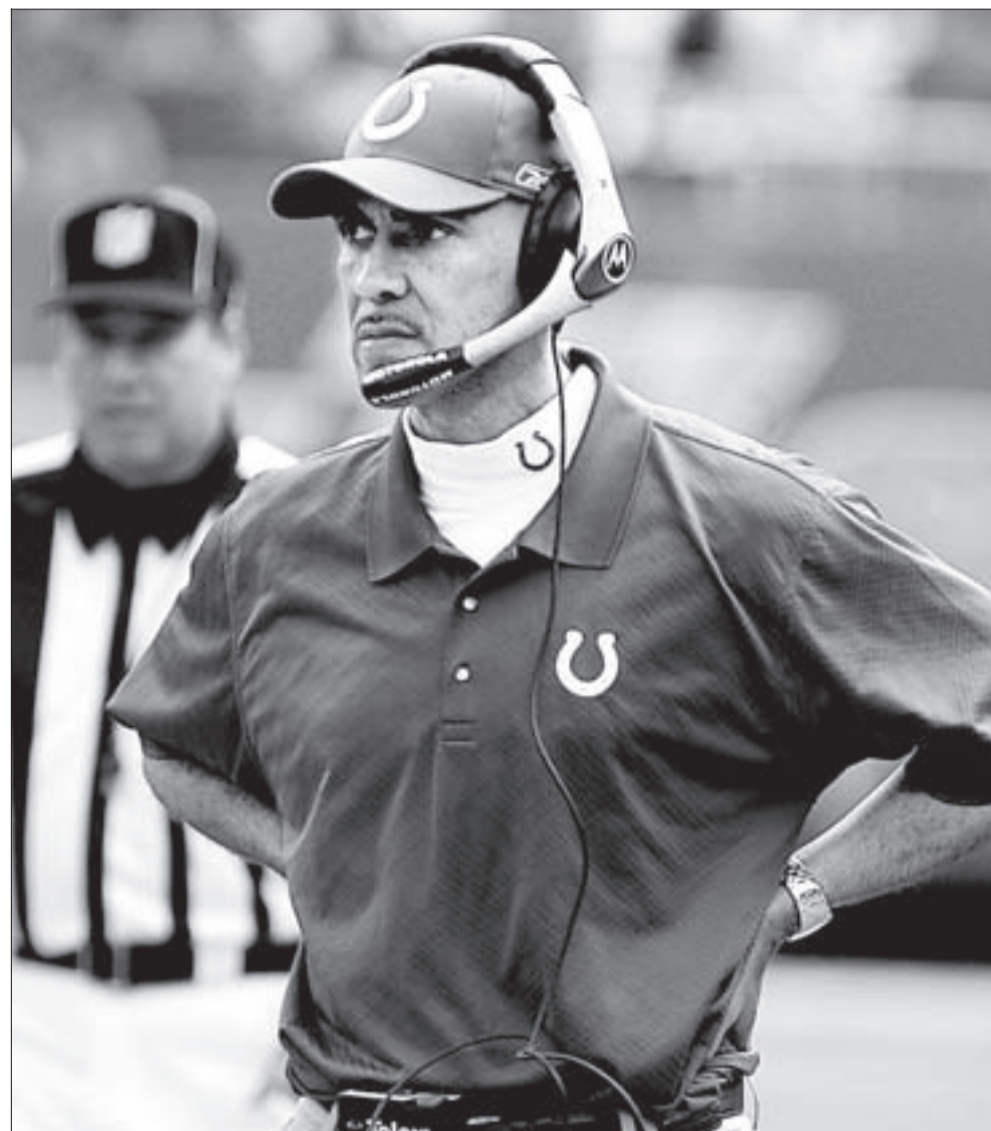
This doesn't mean they aren't demanding or don't push hard. Mr. Dungy has a grading system that counts players' "loafs." If someone isn't running at full speed, or eases up or fails to hit an opponent when he could have, those are loafs, and it's hard to get through a game without getting at least one.

When Mr. Smith, who uses the same system, became the Bears' head coach three years ago, he told players to lift more weights and eat better because he wanted a slimmer, faster team. When he gets mad, he stares straight ahead in silence. His players call it "the Lovie Look" and say it's more frightening — and more of a warning to play better — than a torrent of angry words.

Screaming bosses are certainly less in vogue than they were a dec-



CARLOS OSORIO/ASSOCIATED PRESS



BARTON SILVERMAN/THE NEW YORK TIMES

There are more than a few bosses who could learn a thing or two from the unruffled coaching styles of Chicago's Lovie Smith, left, Indianapolis's Tony Dungy.

ade ago, judging from the leadership changes at some of the larger companies. Home Depot Inc.'s new chief executive officer, Frank Blake, is far milder-mannered than former CEO Bob Nardelli, who was ousted earlier this month. Walt Disney Co. CEO Robert Iger is contained and evenhanded, unlike his predecessor, the mercurial and explosive Michael Eisner.

But there are still numerous business executives who ridicule and scream at employees. As a result, they undermine productivity, discourage innovation and may cause a talent drain at their companies,

says James Clifton, CEO of the Gallup Organization.

"There's a big difference between saying 'you made a stupid mistake' and screaming 'you're really stupid,'" agrees Gary Hayes, a psychologist and co-founder of New York consultant Hayes Brunswick. He worked with a New York law firm where a senior partner flung heavy law books across the room at an associate.

"The associate told me it was all right since the partner intentionally threw to miss — not hit him," Mr. Hayes says. "But the associate soon moved to another firm."

Margie Lubet, a Pittsburgh communications and marketing manager, distinguishes between "bosses with a passionate point of view and belittlers who often want an audience when screaming at you."

Belittlers, Ms. Lubet says, cause emotional distress among employees because they can undermine their confidence. One of her first bosses was like this. She says she learned to let him vent while asking herself: "What's really bothering him?"

For some managers and athletic coaches, screaming is a way to show they are in charge — and be-

haviour that may be expected by their bosses.

The Colts' Mr. Dungy says he didn't get some jobs earlier in his career because he was considered too laid-back and polite and didn't believe being a great coach required him to sacrifice his family or faith.

On one interview, when an owner asked if he would make the team the most important thing in his life, he said no. "I figured I probably wouldn't get that job, and I didn't," he said at a press conference last week. "I think your faith is more important than your job, family is

more important than your job. We all know that's the way it should be, but we're kind of afraid to say that sometimes."

Lovie Smith and he "aren't afraid to say it," and both run their teams in the same way, Mr. Dungy said. The Colts and Bears play "tough, disciplined football even though there's not a lot of profanity from the coaches, there's none of the win-at-all-costs atmosphere. I think for two guys to show you can win that way is important for the country to see."

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GENERATION FLAP

Confronting the 'grey ceiling?' Get in line

For younger workers trying to advance, the operative word just might be patience

BY GREG McMILLAN

The scenario supposedly goes like this: Ambitious younger worker with hopes for a long, upwardly mobile career at the firm, becomes frustrated as he or she smacks into the Grey Ceiling — that workplace situation where older workers are holding on to their jobs longer.

The Gen-Yers and Gen-Xers, so the argument goes, can become disenchanted and lose their spark, as they feel they are being mired in a career holding pattern.

But one expert suggests that scenario is not so different than what has gone on before — even to baby boomers, the very generation now thought to be holding up the job-turnover line.

'As much as I believe the "grey ceiling" may be evident in the workplace, there are a lot of young workers who have too-high expectations and are looking for that high-paying management role out of school.'

"There might be a legitimate concern with the older generation blocking their careers," says David Foot, author and economics professor at the University of Toronto, "but this has been the case for many years."

Prof. Foot also points out that there is no real evidence that a large number of older workers are continuing to work longer. "Not yet," he says. "As a hypothesis, yes, they may work longer, but if they can afford to retire, they retire early. And the ones that stay on the job longer often mentor the younger generation."

Traditionally, workers in their 20s often change jobs and move from one situation to another, says Prof. Foot, author of the 1996 bestseller *Boom Bust & Echo*. "Younger workers have always been part of a revolving door," he says. "Then, around 30, they have kids and a mortgage and that levels off. There

is nothing new going on here."

But that's not to suggest that companies should ignore the ambitions of younger workers, says Stephen Phinney, senior vice-president of corporate services, including human resources, for Progestix-Solutions Inc. of Toronto.

"If they are being frustrated, why are they being frustrated?" he asks. "Are they getting opportunities to do what they consider meaningful work? Do they have some flexibility and say in what they do and how they do it? Is it learning 'cool' or new things? What is the issue?"

For one 26-year-old university graduate, who has held four different job titles at four different Canadian financial institutions in the past four years, it's all about having a plan, and he provided examples of how workers of his generation can overcome job-advancement obstacles in the workplace.

"As much as I believe the 'grey ceiling' may be evident in the workplace, there are a lot of young workers who have too-high expectations and are looking for that high-paying management role out of school," says the investment business worker, who asked to remain anonymous, citing delicate client relationships.

"It's important to have a five-year game plan and set goals that are realistically attainable," he says. "A university degree is not going to get you a job in today's marketplace. All it will do is maybe get you in the door for an interview."

He admits to being fortunate in one way — having contact with a few influential and successful businessmen in the financial industry. But once he got his foot in the door, he says, he put a plan into action that allowed him to move ahead in responsibility, job titles and wages.

He says his first position out of university was a three-month contract that was not continued, then he moved on to two other companies and then progressed to his current job, where he is "extremely happy" and "has no intention of moving elsewhere."

"I think that, as a younger worker, you have to prove yourself and exemplify that you are successful at your current position and ready and willing to accept greater responsibilities," he says.

Mr. Phinney says a lot depends



TIBOR KOLLEY/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

David Foot contends that any frustrations young workers face in trying to climb the career ladder have been felt by previous generations.

on the employer's approach as well. He pointed out that organizations might tell the younger worker that there are no promotional opportunities available within. But they can express their hope for the worker's future — that they "are pleased they have enabled him/her to move on to a larger role in another organization and are excited for them."

This tact, he suggests, might also help build morale at the company. "I believe that the remaining employees will, as a consequence of the company's behaviour, have a positive view of the company and the company will have a new friend in the marketplace."

The Gen-Y investment business

worker advises contemporaries that they should start looking at the competition if they start losing their spark or feel opportunities are few and far between at their current employer.

He says an advantage of being a younger worker is that "you are mobile and can make a transition."

And no small amount of patience can help, too, he adds. "I truly believe that when you approach five to seven years in the business, are well-established and successful, that you become a target for other firms and recruiters. Now the power is on your side."

Special to The Globe and Mail

Veteran workers still have some miles left in them

VETERAN from page C1

According to Ms. Jackson, and Barry Witkin, founder and national director of Prime50.com, a division of human resources firm Drake International, there are a number of signs older workers — generally those 45 years and older — should watch out for in the workplace.

Those could range from no longer being included in memos, to being passed over for promotions, to exclusion from meetings. Mr. Witkin said signs such as those often indicate that management has other plans for their future.

So, how to deal with it?

"Ideally, the mature worker needs to confront this before it becomes an issue," Ms. Jackson said. "That means open communication with everyone who they can possibly talk to, such as human resources, managers, presidents and CEOs. You have to let them know what your plans are."

"Suggest projects you would like to contribute to and perhaps suggest a phase-out plan," she adds.

Wisdom can come in many forms, Ms. Jackson pointed out, experience being only one of them.

She said it is just as important for older workers to have the ability to spot the traits that Gen-Xers and Gen-Yers exhibit, and incorporate them into their own mindset.

Perhaps it means becoming less passive, more accessible, more communicative, more interactive with bosses, co-workers or clients. This could mean publishing a blog, and using all the latest communication technology for instantaneous contact and interchange with others.

Ms. Jackson said older workers also need to avoid being perceived as negative. "They should never dismiss new technology or ideas — ever. They should never undermine themselves and never refuse to try new things. They should never dismiss Gen-Yers. Their demographic is different, they conduct themselves differently, they have a different view of work/life balance. Older workers need to understand the differences and deal with them."

"Above all else, they need to come across as positive. If they don't, that is probably why they find themselves looking for work."

But it also means dispelling myths about older workers, Mr. Witkin says. "The fastest growing demographic group in fitness/health club memberships or per-

Uh oh, sound familiar?

Signs that older workers' jobs may be in jeopardy:

- You aren't included in memos, invited to meetings or sent for further training
- You are passed over for promotions
- Your position is reassigned to a younger person and you are moved to a less important position
- Your hours are reduced with a reduction in compensation
- Your regular evaluations are reduced in frequency or eliminated
- A younger manager becomes your boss
- You stop being consulted for advice or opinions
- You are relocated to another area and become more isolated
- Your job function is to be automated or outsourced
- Your mentorship is taken away from you
- Other older employees are downsized or let go
- You no longer get the plum assignments which are given to younger employees
- You feel less respected, unrewarded and underappreciated

Career advisers Barry Witkin and Gail Jackson

sonal trainers includes the older worker," he said. "So much for this age group not having the energy to continue in their careers."

Certainly, Mr. Bledsoe has indicated that he has the energy and wisdom to continue in his football career. When he was demoted this season in favour of Mr. Romo, the veteran quarterback took it like a pro. Still, some fans couldn't help but feel a sense of empathy as he disappeared to the sidelines.

"The [football] analogy does underscore the need to examine the entire concept of talent management in a work force, whether it be an NFL team or any other business entity," Mr. Phinney of Progestix says. "In the workplace, specifically, experts are predicting that within a few short years the demand for workers will dwarf the available supply."

"All organizations will need to figure out how they can most effectively retain talent."

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