



By Tom O'Shea, amateur soccer player, coach & Agility Principal

We have recently witnessed some extraordinary examples of total Team Agility during the Women's World Cup competition in Germany that resulted in an amazing victory for the Japanese women's team. Even though we were greatly disappointed that the American women did not emerge champions, they also displayed many of the important characteristics of a true high performance team ... determination, resilience and of course the agility to seize opportunities even with only seconds left in the competition. It must be said, however, that the Japanese women earned their first World Cup Championship through superior team agility and much good fortune. They were a team that was focused, fast and flexible and ultimately able to win the world's most prized sports team trophy ... against all odds!

Anyone who knows Agility Consulting principal Tom O'Shea, knows he is passionate about this sport and has been involved as a competitive player, coach and national level volunteer for over 40 years - including playing in the US Veterans Cup, the national championship competition for senior players, eight

of the past ten years. In many respects, soccer and hockey represent two fast-paced, fluid examples of team sports where team agility dominates success more so than physical size, strength or power.

Success in soccer comes from the combination of skillful players operating in highly engaged configurations built for speed and adaptability. No team displays this better than recent World Club Champions, Barcelona with their amazing collection of superstars who probably average five foot seven in height and weigh less than 150 pounds. Players like Xavi, Messi and Iniesta play this game in a focused, fast and flexible zone unsurpassed by others. Their ability to anticipate change and initiate action generates confidence for all teammates as well as the incredible mass of supporters that follow Barca globally. Their speed of play and creative playmaking consistently deliver them major championship that only a few clubs in the entire world can compare.

Agility is the dynamic capability to sense and respond better and faster than your competition from all levels in your organization. World class soccer is known internationally as the “beautiful game” and much of that beauty results from the continuous motion, skill and fluidity when the game is played at the highest level. Agile teams operate with a comparable “beautiful game” character when you see them display their incredible communication skill, active collaboration, rapid speed decision-making, team problem-solving and awesome leadership creativity. These are the skills needed to successfully operate in the Agile Model framework to build Corporate World Cup levels of sustainable performance and the ultimate in TEAM AGILITY.



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