FOREWORD BY BRIGADIER GENERAL CURTIS A. BUZZARD, U.S. ARMY

MARTIN ROONEY
AUTHOR OF *COACH TO COACH*

HIGH TEN

AN INSPIRING STORY ABOUT BUILDING GREAT TEAM CULTURE

WILEY

Praise for *High Ten*

"On every team across every sport and every business, a cohesive and inclusive culture remains the most fundamental objective. When a coach or leader wins the team's heart and respect, success always follows closely behind. For building a powerful culture, I give this book a High Ten!"

– Howie Long, NFL Hall of Fame, Super Bowl Champion and eight-time Pro Bowl, Analyst Fox Sports

"Respect, inclusion, and teamwork are at the foundation of every great team. These winning hallmarks can also be difficult for a coach or leader to develop. Martin's book gives you the tools to identify and solve some of the biggest challenges facing your team."

– Kyle Shanahan, Head Coach, San Francisco 49ers

"MMA is the epitome of an individual sport, but I learned it takes a team to get you properly prepared. A positive culture can make an average team reach for excellence and a negative culture can bring down the best. This book will help you build a team to succeed."

– Forrest Griffin, UFC Light Heavyweight Champion and Hall of Fame, Vice President of Athlete Development, UFC Performance Center

"Successful enterprises are built on an organizational culture that empowers everyone to embrace the purpose of a day as if they are part of a movement or a cause. High Ten lays out how to forge the warrior spirit that defines highly successful teams."

– Don Katz, Audible Founder and Executive Chairman

"Winning at the highest level is not one or two big things, it's a thousand little things done right. The details of culture are first and foremost. Culture is the heart and soul of every great team and cannot be left to chance. High Ten proves culture is not an accident; it's an action."

– *Phil Simms*, *Superbowl MVP*, *CBS Sports Analyst*

"As the leader of any organization or team, developing a culture of trust and discipline is your number one priority. There are few things as satisfying as working toward a common goal with a team of people you appreciate and admire. Read this book and you will be on your way to building that type of team."

– *Lieutenant General Anthony Burshnick*, *US Air Force (Retired)*, *12th Commandant of the United States Air Force Academy*

"Culture is a powerful force that improves teamwork and creates sustained success. If you want to improve your team, business, or relationships, read this book!"

– *Jon Gordon*, *bestselling author of* The Energy Bus *and* The Power of Positive Leadership

"Being part of a great team gives you confidence and direction as an athlete. To be side by side with a teammate chasing greatness creates a culture of winning. Let *High Ten* show you how to be a better leader of culture."

– *Frankie Edgar*, *UFC Lightweight Champion*

"*High Ten* proves that to achieve success in an industry that is both uniquely collaborative and highly competitive, it's critical to build a team that feels respected, trusted, appreciated, and heard. That feels cared for and inspired. If you can create that environment, anything is possible – absolutely anything!"

– *Karen Baker Landers*, *two-time Oscar winner for Best Sound*, The Bourne Ultimatum *and* Skyfall

"Winning certainly matters, but building cohesive teams requires establishing and sustaining a positive organizational culture that will ultimately deliver performance. *High Ten* delivers with the 'Culture Coach' – an outstanding lesson in mentor-mentee relationships that highlights the importance of a lifelong learning mindset."

– Colonel Nicholas Gist, Director, Department of Physical Education, "Master of the Sword," United States Military Academy

"To build a winning culture, a team must value selfishness, integrity, loyalty, and accountability. The great teams maintain these values during the toughest times. If your goal is to get your organization to buy into your values, the story of *High Ten* is your blueprint to do it."

– Scott Goodale, Head Coach, Rutgers Wrestling, winningest coach in program history, 2019 NCAA Coach of the Year

"Football is a team sport in which culture can make all the difference. I have watched Martin create winning team culture with both teams and businesses. This book shows you how to do it."

– Greg Olsen, 14-year NFL veteran, three-time Pro Bowl, Fox Sports Analyst

"To lead out of hard situations, I found a well-trained team with a culture of excellence, competition and resilience is critical to success. If I didn't have a team with great culture fighting for me, I would not be here today. Hopefully, you'll never need your team to save your life like me, but the information in High Ten might save your business."

– Jason Redman, US Navy SEAL (Retired), Recipient of the Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart, New York Times *bestselling author of* The Trident *and* Overcome

"High Ten is a culture bedrock from which to build any organization or team. Through gripping stories and an experienced lens, this will have every leader ready to positively impact their own environments and better cultivate future success."

– *Casey Brown*, *Head Coach*,
University of Pennsylvania Women's Soccer,
Patriot League Coach of the Year, *All-American and*
WPS Soccer Draftee

"Few people recognize racing as a team sport, but a group of athletes, engineers, mechanics, and a driver all contribute individual talents to drive the team's success. Successful teams have an unselfish culture where teammates can challenge each other to grow while holding each other accountable to the mission. *High Ten* can help you build that type of team."

– *Jeremy Bullins*, *NASCAR Crew Chief*, *Team Penske*

"Everyone knows culture is at the core of every great team, but few people know how to build it. *High Ten* is your blueprint for assessing and adjusting your current culture. If you are a leader in any capacity, let Martin help turn your team into a great group of fire-breathing dragons!"

– *Todd Durkin*, *MA*, *CSCS*, *Founder*, *Fitness Quest 10*, *CEO*,
Todd Durkin Enterprises, *IDEA and ACE*,
Trainer of the Year, *author of* The Impact Body Plan *and*
Get Your Mind Right

"Culture is the backbone of any team or organization. A weak one will crumble, while a strong one will give a unified purpose to all and help you achieve your ultimate goals. *High Ten* will make your culture-game strong!"

– *Claus Souza*, *Assistant Strength and*
Conditioning Coach, *Denver Nuggets*

"*Both hands on deck!* Martin Rooney is once again *on point* and on fire. In his latest book, *High Ten*, he clarifies business culture, team productivity, and personal inspiration that you can take to a new level of success. This 'story within a story' will leave you and your team members blessed, changed for the better, and in position to win."

– *Jeffrey Gitomer*, *bestselling author of* Get Sh*t Done *and* The Little Red Book of Selling

"The building of a team and a culture is driven by trust. Embracing and genuinely loving one another is the method by which trust is built. Martin Rooney's book shows you how to build the kind of trust necessary to create a winning team."

– *Matthew Driscoll*, *Head Coach*, *University of North Florida Men's Basketball*, *winningest coach in program history*, *three-time ASUN Coach of the Year*

"I've coached teams from four different nations and culture is the most important step in building a team. If the team is not on the same page culturally, working together toward a common goal is extremely hard. Let Martin's book help you find the Keepers and lose your Vultures."

– *Todd Hays*, *Olympic Silver Medalist*, *Coach to 6 Olympic Medalists and 13 World Championship Medalists*, *Head Coach Bobsleigh Canada*

HIGH TEN

MARTIN ROONEY
AUTHOR OF *COACH TO COACH*

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To the great Dr. Rob Gilbert, who taught me the best person
on *the team is the best person* for *the team.*

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Foreword

Bottom line – great leaders focus on establishing great cultures! In *High Ten*, Martin Rooney tells an inspiring story about how to build a great team with a great culture, and he shares lessons and insights that will work anywhere: at home, in the military, on sports teams, or in corporate America. In the Army, our leaders are expected to provide purpose, direction, and motivation to their soldiers, and as commanders they are explicitly responsible for the culture of their units. But the very best commanders find a way for those in the unit to also "own" the culture – so it's everyone's responsibility. Martin drives this point home and then some.

Throughout my Army career, I've learned and observed that when building a culture, the foundation is character and values. These are essential to building trust, which leads to cohesive teams. Teams where people feel like they are part of something, not just in something. Teams that are loyal to one another and also to their values. Teams that are disciplined and whose standards exemplify excellence, and they hold one another accountable in meeting or exceeding those standards. Doing otherwise would be an acceptance of mediocrity, and that doesn't equate to winning on the battlefield, playing field, or in life. Strong cohesion also results in extraordinary resiliency, and teams that are able to absorb tough blows and bounce back even stronger. We all know what it's like

to be on a great team with a great culture because it is enjoyable, rewarding, and they win. In *High Ten*, Martin reinforces all of these lessons and more through a story where two teams – one athletic and one business – grow from good to great by focusing on their culture.

While I was serving as the Commandant of Cadets at the United States Military Academy, our primary and enduring focus was on developing leaders of character. For any future leader, there's much to learn in this book, from appreciating why people are the centerpiece of your culture to ways to empower your people and reap the value of their initiative to understanding and leveraging the "3 Bs" of culture – Beings (who we are), Beliefs (what we stand for), and Behaviors (how we do it) – and, finally, to recognizing the indicators of good culture. Leaders will also learn the significance of "Culture Crusaders," who perpetuate the culture, and to deeply examine their "Culture Custodians," coveting the "Culture Keepers" and rooting out the "Culture Vultures." As I read this book, I highlighted numerous passages, took notes, and reflected on my own efforts at creating cultures over the last 28 years of service. You can never stop studying leadership; it's a lifelong journey of education, experiences, and reflection.

Throughout *High Ten*, Martin also builds on his previous book, *Coach to Coach*, and reinforces that great leaders must also see themselves as coaches. He shares important insights on how to coach but also explains how a coach gets the whole team to steward the culture. It starts with the coach setting the foundation – the vision, standards, and expectations – and doing it alongside the players to maximize their ownership. Coaches then focus relentlessly on driving the team to achieve these goals.

Martin also subtly reinforces that leadership and coaching are more art than science. The Xs and Os and tactics matter, but he reminds us that ultimately it's the culture that determines success. As Martin writes, "Your competitive advantage is culture." If you want to learn to be a great coach and how to develop a great culture, then this book is for you!

Brigadier General Curtis A. Buzzard, U.S. Army

The views expressed in the foreword are those of the author and do not reflect the official position of the United States Military Academy, Department of the Army, or Department of Defense.

Introduction

In today's war for attention, culture is not simply a buzzword. It's your biggest competitive advantage.

Before you worry about building your next program, product, or membership base, be more concerned with building a great culture first. As businesses and organizations learned during the pandemic, when you have a great culture, you are more prepared for big challenges. When you don't, you must be prepared to have more of them.

Everyone wants to feel both appreciated and part of something bigger – to feel part of a cool culture. The way a leader creates this special environment is by creating a culture based in trust, purpose, and fun.

But you may have heard that "culture isn't taught, it's caught."

High Ten is going to fly in the face of that statement and teach you about culture.

As you will learn, you don't get the culture for which you hope, wait, or wish – you get the one you design, implement, and maintain. And beware – if you don't design your culture, someone else will!

This book is the sequel to *Coach to Coach*. That book contained my philosophy of how to be a great coach and leader. In *High Ten*, I build on that information and teach you how a coach creates and leads a great culture. If you liked the easy-to-read style of *Coach to Coach*, you will

enjoy following the journeys of Brian Knight and Marcus Chase 25 years later. Among all the positive feedback about *Coach to Coach*, the only critique was that the readers wanted more – more depth into the characters, more lessons, and more stories. I believe this book has made good on those requests.

High Ten is a business book, a sports book, and a motivational leadership book too. Although *High Ten* is a fictional story, the contents of this book are not theory; the information inside was produced through decades of real-life trial and error. Having helped build the cultures of two global businesses that have lasted a combined 40 years, this book was written so you enjoy the same success without making the same mistakes. Everything I have learned about culture from working with top professional and college sport teams, military organizations, and Fortune 500 companies is waiting for you inside.

To be clear, building or changing a culture can be difficult. Whether you are starting a business or already leading a company, team, or family, *High Ten* provides you with a working roadmap of how to navigate your current cultural challenges. Culture is not a one-time event; it's a never-ending process. And *High Ten* is your blueprint of how to build a culture that not only stands for something, but also stands the test of time. The question is not whether the culture lessons inside this book work, but whether you will work them. As any culture coach will tell you – what you permit, you promote.

In addition to helping you learn about people, *High Ten* will also teach you that there is no culture without communication. Do you have a team, leadership, or culture question? Do you have a favorite story or idea from either

book? Write me at Martin@CoachingGreatness.com, and I look forward to starting a conversation.

I hope that you enjoy this book and, like Brian, Sam, and Marcus, that you never look at culture the same way again.

Giving you a big "High Ten,"

Martin Rooney
Gatlinburg, TN
2021

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Trackside Diner

Schutz, Gianni Grippo, Lucas Noonan, Charlie Hoffhine, Mike Springer, Ralph Mirabelli, Andrew Tucker, Rich Venditti, John Naphor, Luis Vasquez, John Derent, Ed Tejada, Rich Thurston, Keith Gallas, Brian Roberts, Mike Parillo, Patrick Gray, Kelly Gray, Richie Mendoza, John Praino, Phil Squatrito, Keith Jeffrey, Tom Robertson, Luka Hocevar, John Annillo, Mike Sobczak, Kian Ameli, Michelle Kelly, Michael Soos, Johannes "Hatsolo" Hattunen, Petri Rasanen, Rob Broeckx, Cory Fernandes, Gio Grassi, Josh Jirgal, Zach Even-Esh, Derek and Jaime Rauscher, Linda and Tero Puukko, Jen and Allen Andreoli, Greg and Pam O'Connor, Greg Gonzalez, Jason Hall, and Dennis Rasmussen.

Special thanks to my TFW team and global network. I would never have been able to learn the lessons in this book if not for their faith in me and the Training for Warriors program. And perhaps the cultural aspect for which I am most proud is we call ourselves the "Familia."

My thanks to all the folks at Wiley, especially senior editor Zachary Schisgal, who, based on the success of *Coach to Coach*, gave me a second swing at the plate.

Cultures are passed down from generation to generation. Big thanks to my parents, Marty and Jeanne, for not only pushing me forward, but never letting me forget where I came from. And special thanks to my parents-in-law, Roger and Michelle, who have helped create some special traditions in my life.

Finally, perhaps the biggest lesson from this book is that culture starts in your own home. I am so grateful for Team Rooney, made up of my wife, Amanda, and our four daughters: Sofia, Kristina, Keira, and Sasha. Thanks most of all to the "Roondogs" for putting up with a coach for a husband and father and for being my biggest supporters in my life's work.

About the Author

Martin Rooney is an internationally recognized coach, sought-after presenter, and best-selling author. A former U.S. bobsledder, Division I track athlete, Judo black belt, record-setting powerlifter, and two-time Guinness World Record holder, Martin is now on a mission to create a world of better coaches. As founder of the global fitness organization Training for Warriors and the former COO of the Parisi Speed School, he has helped create two business cultures that have positively affected millions of people worldwide.

Over the last 20 years, Martin has adventured to over 35 countries and coached hundreds of athletes from the NFL, MLB, UFC, NBA, and WNBA; numerous Olympic medalists; All-Americans; and World Champions. In addition to professional athletes, he has coached hundreds of high school teams with athletes who have gone on to compete at numerous top Division I colleges across the United States. He has also spent a decade testing the culture-building principles in this book as a youth, middle school, and high school track coach.

Martin has shared his *High Ten* philosophy with Fortune 500 companies such as Marriott International, Nike, Prudential, and Hasbro; military organizations such as the Army Rangers, Army Airborne, and the Navy Seals; NFL teams such as the New York Jets, Cincinnati Bengals, Carolina Panthers, and New York Giants; and

universities such as Arizona State University, University of Alabama, Oregon State University, Rutgers University, Auburn University, Brown University, and West Point.

Martin lives in North Carolina with Team Rooney, composed of his wife, Amanda, and their four daughters, Sofia, Kristina, Keira, and Sasha.

Does Your Team or Business Need a Culture Coach?

Martin delivers high-energy keynotes and game-changing half-day or full-day culture and coaching workshops for companies and associations around the world. For more information or to contact Martin directly, please visit www.coachinggreatness.com or email him at Martin@CoachingGreatness.com.

About the Company

This book may be a fictional account of a fictitious business, but Stamina is based on a very real company called 1Huddle. Headquartered in Newark, New Jersey, 1Huddle is a workforce tech startup that uses games to inspire and level up workers in every industry. 1Huddle works with leading brands from across the globe to create better, more equitable organizational cultures that are ready to handle any disruption the future of work has in store. Through the use of science-backed, quick-burst mobile games, 1Huddle is transforming the way companies worldwide tackle company culture and worker development.

So if you want to learn more and actually get your hands on 1Huddle's culture-building game platform, then you can start playing the *High Ten* game now by going to http://www.1huddle.co/highten.