

# Leadership in Cinema



Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program

## INVICTUS

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Studio: Warner Brothers ..... Released: 2009

Genre: Drama/History ..... Audience Rating: PG-13

Runtime: 133 minutes

### Materials

DVD player, television or projection system, Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles handouts, notepad, writing utensil

### Objective

Students will identify Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles illustrated within Invictus and discuss leadership lessons learned with group members or mentors.

### Historical Background

From 1948 to 1994, the National Party of South Africa enforced racial segregation through apartheid legislation. The African National Congress (ANC) was the opposition to apartheid rule. In 1961 Nelson Mandela became the leader of the ANC's armed wing. He was incarcerated in 1962, convicted of sabotage, and sentenced to life in prison.

### Basic Plot

After he was released from prison, Nelson Mandela was elected president of South Africa in the first democratic election in the country's history. Using the national rugby team, the Springboks, Mandela was able to unite a nation shattered by violence and racism.

## Biography

**Nelson Mandela** (Morgan Freeman) was born in 1918 in Umtata, Cape of Good Hope, South Africa. He became the first member of his family to attend school where he was given his English name “Nelson” by his teacher. In 1937 he attended Wesleyan College in Healdtown where he became interested in boxing and running. Mandela studied at Fort Hare University for one year before being asked to leave for boycotting university policies. He then began a job at a law firm as an article clerk. While employed there, he earned his B.A. from South Africa University via correspondence. Mandela became involved in politics in 1948 and in 1961 became the leader of the ANC’s armed wing. He was incarcerated for sabotage in 1962 and sentenced to life in prison. After serving 27 years, he was released on February 11, 1990. In 1994 he was elected President of South Africa and presided over the transition from minority and apartheid rule. For his efforts to end apartheid he won international respect for his advocacy of national reconciliation, and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993. Mandela was married three times, had six children and twenty grandchildren. (Sources: Carlin, John. *Invictus: Nelson Mandela and the Game That Made a Nation*. New York: Penguin, 2009; [Nobel Prize website](#); and [Wikipedia](#).)

**Francois Pienaar** (Matt Damon) was born in 1967. Francois started with the Springboks in 1993 and was selected as captain after his first game. He remained captain his entire career, which lasted until 1996, and was known as one of the most successful captains the team had. After leaving the Springboks, he became a coach for a rugby team in England. He currently resides in Cape Town where his son is the godchild of Nelson Mandela. In 2004, he was voted 50th of the top 100 great South Africans and in 2005 he was inducted into the International Rugby Hall of Fame. ([Source: South African History](#))

**Linga Moonsamy** (Patrick Mofoking) was head of the Presidential Protection Unit (PPU). He was a former guerilla in Mandela’s African National Congress (ANC). He is now chief of corporate security for South African Airways and is married to a niece of Nelson Mandela’s wife (Graca Machel). (Source: Carlin, John. *Invictus: Nelson Mandela and the Game That Made a Nation*. New York: Penguin, 2009)

## Facilitation Options

Students should identify Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles within *Invictus*. The objective is not to identify every leadership example but to promote thought and discussion. Students should be less concerned with how many principles they view within the film and more concerned with how the principles they recognize can be used to develop themselves as a leader.

The film can be viewed in its entirety or by clip selection, depending on facilitator intent and time schedules. Another method is to have the employee(s) view the film on his/her own and then hold the discussion session.

## Full-film Facilitation Suggestion

When opting for the full- film method, the facilitator should determine a good breaking point near the middle of the film.

1. Review the Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles with students.
2. Advise students to document instances within the film that illustrate/ violate the Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles on the handout provided.
3. Break students into small discussion groups.
4. Show students Invictus.
5. Be sure to give breaks throughout the film.
6. Take time during the break to go over the guided discussion.
7. Provide a short synopsis with some scenes to pay attention to before beginning the rest of the film.
8. Have students discuss their findings and how they will apply leadership lessons learned to their role in wildland fire suppression. Facilitate discussion for groups that have difficulty.
9. Wrap up the session and encourage students to apply leadership lessons learned in their personal and work lives.

## Clip Facilitation Suggestion

1. Review the Wildland Fire Leadership Value or Principles targeted for discussion. Ask students to identify the value or principle being illustrated after viewing each clip.
2. Show the clip.

Chapter	Time	Description
3	8:45	Mandela's first day in office
4	12:30	Bodyguards meet
4	12:30	Interracial team
6	28:00	Mandela speaks to National Sports Council
9	43:00	Mandela invites Francois Pienaar to tea
12	54:45	Springboks run coaching clinics
14	1:06:18	Springboks to learn national anthem
15	1:08:28	Mandela visits Springboks practice
22	1:47:10	Lumu key factor to winning

3. Facilitate discussion regarding the selected clip and corresponding value and/or principle.

4. Break students into small discussion groups.
5. Have students discuss their findings and how they will apply leadership lessons learned to their role in wildland fire suppression. Facilitate discussion for groups that may have difficulty.
6. Wrap up the session and encourage students to apply leadership lessons learned in their work and personal lives.

## Mentor Suggestion

Use either method presented above. The mentor should be available to the student to discuss lessons learned from the film as well as incorporating them to the student's leadership self-development plan.

Encourage individuals to keep a leadership journal.

Suggest other wildland fire leadership toolbox items that will contribute to the overall leadership development of the student.

## References

- Carlin, John. *Invictus: Nelson Mandela and the Game That Made a Nation*. New York: Penguin, 2009. (Formerly published as *Playing the Enemy*)

Encourage students of leadership to visit the [website](#).

## Invictus

### Guided Discussion

1. On his first day in office, Mandela gathers his staff for a meeting to express his expectations of his staff. What leadership principles does this portray and how does the staff react? (8:45, Chapter 3)
  - **Duty – Mandela takes charge and develops a plan to accomplish goals.**
  - **Integrity – Mandela's staff expects him to retaliate for decades of apartheid but instead he shows compassion and gives them the option to stay and rebuild the country.**
  - **Respect – Mandela leaves his body guards out in the hall because he wants to face everyone on an even level.**
  - **Throughout Mandela's speech the body language of the staff changes from expecting to be fired to realizing that they are welcome to stay on and work for a common goal.**
2. When Linga Moonsamy requests more bodyguards, Mandela hires a group of white South Africans. When this group reports for duty, Moonsamy argues that these men cannot be trusted. Mandela says to Moonsamy that "reconciliation starts here." Discuss situations within the wildland fire community where you had to work with someone you didn't trust. How did you handle the situation and what was the outcome? (12:30, Chapter 4)
  - **Answers will vary.**

- **“Leading up” helps you gain respect, allowing you to build trust between each other.**
3. How do the four Afrikaner body guards respond to being part of an intermixed team? Is this reaction an appropriate and/or professional response? (12:30, Chapter 4)
    - **The Afrikaners report for duty as assigned and follow the orders of Moonsamy. Their attitude toward the assignment is one of professionalism without judgment.**
  4. Mandela interrupts the meeting of the National Sports Council to persuade them to rescind their vote on changing the name of the Springboks, their uniforms and their emblem. What is the importance of restoring the Springboks? (28:00, Chapter 6)
    - **Mandela wants to use the rugby team to reconcile the country and bring them together instead of resorting to petty revenge.**
    - **Mandela’s actions demonstrate integrity by choosing the difficult right over the easy wrong.**
  5. Mandela invites Francois Pienaar to tea where they discuss their philosophies on leadership. What are Pienaar’s views on leadership? What forms of leadership are presented? What would inspire you and your crew to excel in your duties beyond your normal expectations? (43:00, Chapter 9)
    - **Give examples of when you needed inspiration as opposed to simply being told what to do. Have the students discuss situations that have inspired them.**
    - **Pienaar chooses to lead by example and builds inspiration. Setting the example demonstrates integrity.**
    - **The forms of leadership can include fear tactics, appeal to emotions, etc.**
    - **Are all of the above forms of leadership equally effective? How do they differ at varying levels of authority?**
  6. The Springboks receive an “order from the top” to start running coaching clinics around the country. How does the team respond? How does Pienaar respond to the team’s response? (54:45, Chapter 12)
    - **The team responds by complaining, saying they don’t have time; they’re not a “circus show.” Pienaar tells them he’s not going to bring their concerns up to management because they are more than a rugby team now, and it’s time they changed.**
    - **Sometimes as a leader you get orders that you don’t necessarily agree with but are necessary to complete a task. Discuss how you deal with these challenges.**
  7. Mandela personally visits the Springboks during their practice. What signs of respect do you see during this scene? Cite examples from Mandela and the Springboks. How does showing respect build and inspire a team? Is respect shown on the fireline between separate resources? (1:08:28, Chapter 15)
    - **Mandela greets each player by their names, showing he respects each one individually. This also inspires the team, knowing that the leader of their country learned all of their names.**
    - **The Springboks show their respect for Mandela by giving him a Springboks hat.**
    - **Discuss how respect is displayed on the fireline.**
    - **Include personal examples and scenes from the movie to discuss how showing respect builds a team.**
  8. At first the Springboks are reluctant to learn the words to their national anthem but at the start of the World Cup they had all learned the words. What wildland fire principles and values are displayed? Do you see examples like this situation on the fireline? (1:06:18, Chapter 14)
    - **Integrity – leading by example.**

- **Respect – respect for their new South Africa.**
  - **An example might be if you're working for different management teams during an incident that may have varying tactics.**
9. Once Pienaar realizes that Lumu is a key factor in whether or not they win, he calls for a change in tactics. How does this display good leadership? How does this relate to wildland fire? (1:47:10, Chapter 22)
- **Refer to “Making sound and timely decisions” under “Duty” in the Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles.**

## Invictus

The following clips illustrate the Wildland Leadership Values and Principles. These are only guidelines and may be interpreted differently by other viewers. They are presented here as a guide for facilitation.

### Duty

- The Springboks demonstrate duty when they participate in the coaching camps with the children. (56:50, Chapter 13)
- Mandela brings his staff together to outline his expectations. (8:45, Chapter 3)
- The Afrikaner bodyguards report for duty and follow the instructions of Moonsamy with professionalism. (12:30, Chapter 4)

### Respect

- Nelson Mandela learns the names of each individual rugby player. (1:08:28, Chapter 15)
- On his first day in office, Mandela asks his bodyguards to remain outside the meeting so he can face his staff on an equal level. (9:53, Chapter 3)
- Many times throughout the movie, Mandela demonstrates respect for others by treating people as equals and not abusing his position of power. (45:45, Chapter 10)

### Integrity

- When Mandela sees the newspaper that questions his ability to lead, he thinks of it as a legitimate question rather than a personal attack. (6:49, Chapter 2)
- When Mandela receives a phone call regarding the National Sports Council's decision, his assistant expresses concern that asking the council to rescind their vote may hurt Mandela's ability to lead the country. He responds “The day I'm not willing to do that is the day I'm not fit to lead.” This is an example of choosing the difficult right over the easy wrong. (28:00, Chapter 6)
- After the second loss, Francois Pienaar proposes a toast to the team's defeat and in this scene he sets the example and shares the hardships with the team equally. (36:45, Chapter 6)