

# Think Like a Leader

Former NFL Quarterback Archie Manning explains his thoughts on leadership.

by Kasey Brown, associate editor

There is one constant to prevail over any challenge, Archie Manning, former NFL quarterback and father to three sons, including two NFL quarterbacks, told attendees of the second general session Feb. 6 at the 2014 Cattle Industry Convention and NCBA Trade Show in Nashville, Tenn. That constant is leadership.

Leadership is a word that is much discussed, but hard to enact, said Manning, offering three main thoughts to success in leadership.

**1) Think like a leader.** The former quarterback of the New Orleans Saints explained that even though his team had many rough games, his coaches always taught him to think as a winner. To think like a winner means to be better prepared, better conditioned and more determined.

**2) Set goals like a leader.** He recommended writing down your goals, because if you don't manage your goals, you will never accomplish them. In a survey in Texas, he said, there was a strong correlation between success and goals. The most successful of the surveyed group were those in the 3% who had written goals. Those in the 27% with unwritten goals were moderately successful, but those without any goals at all had very little success.



PHOTO BY KASEY BROWN

► Managers do things right, but leaders do the right thing, Archie Manning shared with cattlemen gathered for the 2014 Cattle Industry Convention in Nashville, Tenn.

“Sometimes in life, success is the journey, not the destination. Set your goals, because they are part of the journey,” he added.

**3) Act like a leader.** Leadership is an action verb, he said. It is not a title; it is something you do. Managers do things right, but leaders do the right thing. They think of the big picture, and they encourage and promote the

team instead of an “I” mentality. He shared a story of when his son Eli, quarterback of the New York Giants, was in his first Super Bowl game against the New England Patriots. The Giants were down by four points near the end of the game. He said Eli remembered something his brother, Peyton, quarterback of the Denver Broncos, told him.

Peyton had said it is better to be down by four points near the end of the game than three, because it makes the team more aggressive. They must go for the touchdown and a win, rather than playing conservatively to tie the game with a three-point field goal to go into overtime. In Eli's case, the Giants did achieve that touchdown, and won the Super Bowl. The bigger the challenge, the bigger the opportunity for success, Manning said.

There is no question you will face adversity, but what will you do when you face adversity, Manning asked, urging the audience to always keep priorities in line.

“Every time you do what's right, you're a leader. Every time you do what's hard, you're a leader. Every time you have built for the future, you're a leader,” he concluded.



**Editor's Note:** For additional coverage of the Cattle Industry Convention, visit the Newsroom at [www.4cattlemen.com](http://www.4cattlemen.com).

## Captain Phillips Shares Story of Courage, Perseverance

“It was hard; I was scared the whole time. I didn't know how it was all going to turn out,” said Captain Richard Phillips as he addressed more than 6,000 individuals at the opening general session of the 2014 Cattle Industry Convention, which got under way Feb. 4 in Nashville, Tenn. “But enough about my wedding day.”

It gathered a quick round of laughter, but most in the audience knew Phillips was alluding to the harrowing experience he had at sea in April 2009 when his cargo ship, the *MV Maersk Alabama*, was taken hostage by Somali pirates.

In 2013, a major motion picture titled *Captain Phillips* told the story of the incident, and Phillips has also authored a book, *A Captain's Duty*, about his life as a merchant mariner.

During his keynote address, Phillips recounted many of the details that unfolded from the time the pirates got onboard until his dramatic rescue by a Navy SEAL team, and he emphasized the importance of leadership during stressful situations.

As captain, he said, he views his job as responsible 24-7 for the ship, crew and cargo.

From various experiences in his career — not the least of which was his life-threatening experience with the four armed pirates — Phillips said he has three points he wants others to also realize:

- You are much stronger than you know.
- Nothing is lost until we choose to give up.

► A dedicated, focused team can accomplish anything. Phillips endured many things as a hostage and, in retrospect, he said, all of these principles held true.

“Somewhere within us, we find the strength to do what must be done,” he said, acknowledging that in agriculture, people face competition and a changing economy. “You may wish at times it was just four pirates shooting at you.”

Of his ordeal, Phillips said, “I vowed I wouldn't give up.”

He said he worked to stay calm, adding, “No one solves a crisis by being panicked.”

Phillips said he does not view himself as a hostage or a hero. He just did what he could to keep his ship, crew and cargo safe, which as a captain he felt was his duty. None of the crew lost their life in the ordeal.

“The real heroes are those U.S. Navy SEALs who risked their lives to save mine,” he said.

Phillips concluded by alluding to a larger metaphor for life, noting that we are all riding on ever-shifting seas. He emphasized seeing tough times through and working together, saying, “If we come together as a dedicated, focused team we can overcome any obstacle.”

— by Kindra Gordon, field editor