

NBA coach Pat Riley on preparation

The more thorough you are, the less desperate you will be.

Pat Riley, who last year won his fifth National Basketball Association championship as head coach, spells that out:

- **Be ready for anything.** “In any competitive situation,” Riley says, “a chief duty of leadership is to minimize the impact of unexpected conditions on the team.”
- **Map out the future.** Many salespeople don’t plan their pitch until they’re cruising down the off-ramp. That’s too late.
- **Close your mouth, and open your eyes.** A tremendous work ethic fuels Riley, but he acts more like a student than a teacher.

“Never demean the time you spend in the trenches,” Riley says.

- **Never write off your team.** In the first game of the 1985 NBA finals, Riley’s Lakers were drubbed so badly that it was called the Memorial Day Massacre. The Lakers ended up winning the series.

“You do have a choice about how you come back and prepare to win again,” Riley says.

—Adapted from “He Leaves Nothing to Chance,” Michael Mink, *Investor’s Business Daily*.