

# Kentucky Derby Offers **Lessons for the Workplace**



As race fans eagerly await this weekend's Kentucky Derby, the first leg of the famed Triple Crown, final preparation work is well underway for the jockeys, their trainers and the scores of others who make a Derby victory possible.

**The stakes are high.** If all goes as planned, the jockeys are in their best shape and at the top of their game both physically and mentally. The horses have run every possible workout on every possible type of track condition they could face come race day. The owners have invested in the right equipment, tools and resources to help secure a win.

## **Yes, everyone and every horse is fully prepared.**

Yet, there are elements that are out of their control. Derby weather is notorious for being unpredictable. In the history of the Derby spanning 144 years, a full 48 percent of them have experienced rain on race day. It's been as cold as 36 degrees Fahrenheit and as warm as 94 degrees, it's sleeted, it's been windy, it's been warm and it's been calm.

The Derby illustrates that being prepared can take a team only so far; the real advantage comes for those who expect the unexpected, and adjust in the moment.

## **It's a good lesson for the workplace.**

Every day, teams come together preparing to win the competition. A good leader guides them through their "workouts," leverages the right resources to fully prepare, and coaches them to expect the unexpected, to understand the "day of competition" environment, and adjust accordingly to claim "victory."

Winning in any arena is always a product of team. Just like on Derby day, the stakes are high, but a well-prepared and adaptable team will come out wearing roses.



your people. your culture. your partner.

For more information, contact [info@avantleadership.com](mailto:info@avantleadership.com).

*For more than 30 years, Avant has advanced leadership and organizational performance with Fortune 500 companies. Author: Kristin L. Ihle, Ph.D.*