

John Blanchard

The Leader Within: Owning Your Story, Unlocking Your Impact

“Know thyself” is more than an ancient axiom—it is a non-negotiable requirement for today’s transformational leaders. In this powerful and reflective session, participants will explore how self-awareness, vulnerability, and personal ownership form the bedrock of impactful leadership. Drawing from the openness and vulnerability captured in Blanchard’s autobiography, *Don’t Talk About It*, this session unpacks how our personal narratives, both the triumphs and the trials, shape the way we lead.

Rather than avoiding difficult chapters of our past, transformational leaders learn to examine them, integrate them, and leverage them. Through guided reflection and meaningful discussion, participants will leave the session with these leadership nuggets:

- How the highs and lows of their life experiences influence their leadership behaviors
- The impact of family of origin dynamics on decision-making, conflict, and communication
- The difference between leading from insecurity versus leading from wholeness
- What it means to truly believe: I Am Enough

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John Blanchard

Leadership Development Consultant, Pittsburgh Pirates

John Blanchard is devoted to helping individuals and teams reach their full potential through personal growth and effective leadership.

With 28 years in college athletics—25 of them at the University of North Carolina—John served as Senior Associate Athletics Director for Student-Athlete Services, where he founded the groundbreaking Richard A. Baddour Carolina Leadership Academy, the first of its kind in college athletics. His leadership model has since been replicated nationwide. He also chaired committees for the ACC and NCAA, advancing collegiate sports leadership.

Now in his thirteenth year as a leadership development consultant for the Pittsburgh Pirates, John previously held the same role with the Kansas City Royals, continuing his work in team and leadership development.

A Stanford University graduate and former standout football player, John earned All-West Coast first team honors and later coached at Stanford and Cornell. He co-founded the NCAA Volunteers for Youth program and earned a master's in social work from San Diego State University, later directing a nonprofit in North Carolina and receiving the Order of the Long Leaf Pine for his service.

John and his wife, Dawn London Blanchard—founder and president of a college consulting firm—have been married for 46 years and are proud parents of three married children and five grandchildren.