

90 Minutes

Life is just like a football match. You want success, but it doesn't always go your way. Practice makes perfect. You make mistakes, and learn from them. Together you make progress. Supporters help you to play even better. And fair play is always the best.

In this book, Siama (45) looks back on her career. What went well? What failed? What did she learn? What can she change? And what does she want to achieve?

90 Minutes helps you look at your life like a football match. The book is a coach. He sends you back to the field revitalized after half-time. Maybe he'll change your position. At least he'll give you food for thought.



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Your Life in
90
minutes
GIRL POWER edition

Your Life in 90 minutes

For Diego & Eliza

Colophon:

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Foreword

The birth of '90 Minutes' took place on the stands of Camp Nou, the home of FC Barcelona. Together, with a very good friend, we discovered the similarities between a football match and the ordinary life.

As people in their mid-forties, we established that we were starting out on the second half of our lives. We looked back on the first half contently and with joy. Not that everything went smoothly, but whatever happened, we never gave up. The talking and thinking in football terms was contagious and inspiring. My friends' son, a talented football player, picked it up immediately. By thinking in football terms, he knew exactly where he stood and where he wanted to go.

Encouraged by this success, I asked myself the question: 'What if life was like a football match of 90 Minutes?' I selected 11 elements that can offer a substantial contribution to the quality of your life.

I would like to cover these elements with you in '90 Minutes'. I hope that you enjoy reading this and that you find some of these stories interesting. If that succeeds, my mission is accomplished.

Thanks

I would like to thank the following people for shaping '90 Minutes' Firstly, Steven Woudenberg for his beautiful illustrations. Also, my thanks to Roelant van Ewijk who contributed to the thought process during this writing.

Eddy
2019

Short Introduction

My name is Siama, I played professional football up until I was 35 years old. This was the most important period in my existence up until now. It's remarkable how many similarities I see between football and the ordinary life. Playing football has taught me some valuable lessons in life and I would like to share those with you. I translate 90 Minutes of a football match into 90 years of life and I hope at least, that these 90 years are given to me.

At the age of 45 years I am in the dressing room of my last club. A place that feels very familiar to me. It is half-time. Time to take stock of the first three quarters. What have I learnt? What went well, and where can I improve? By analysing this properly, I know what I must do in order to prepare for the second half of my life without football.



1. Half-time

Phew... a tricky match. I have to catch my breath for a second... just received a bump against my weak left knee, an old injury that's surfacing again. I was too late and should have engaged the duel with more conviction. More focus.

The first 10 minutes went decently, a bit of looking and probing. Then came two hits, one after the other. My brother's accident and the divorce. Luckily school, friends and football offered a distraction.

After 20 minutes, I started shaping my life more and more. I wanted to learn as much as possible and I was not afraid of making mistakes. I performed a few daring actions that worked well. My quick transfer to the media agency was a direct hit, CEO within two years. A good team with fine players. I dominated the game, passed good balls that were lobbed in the goal. Scored myself here and there. Awesome, life is a party. This is my game. A nice relationship, two wonderful children, enjoying life as much as possible with family and friends. Bring it on!

Fifteen minutes before half-time, the game suddenly tilted. It started with the takeover of a competitor, that ran into trouble. Our agency hit some hard times. Blaming each other, we lost control. I didn't know what to do, I hesitated too much. Worked even harder, tried to force it, but the balls bounced off my feet. Tension and irritation between each other. Even at home. I rub my painful knee. Old wounds.

That's not how it works. Take a deep breath and feel where my power lies. I decide what I want myself. I know what I want. Be successful, do what I do best. Focus, take time, distribute the game and make some runs. Yes, that is what I can do. No more, and no less. This is going to be my half, the second half of my life.

The coach yells 'Time!' I think 'GO!'

Focus on your talent.
GO!





2. My Team

We come back to the field. I look around and see my teammates. Good girls. Hearing the cheers, I feel the slaps on my shoulder. A tap on my head. 'Let's do it!' The captain pulls me aside for a moment, 'Keep it simple. I'll stay near you, you can always pass the ball to me.' This feels good, gives me confidence, I don't have to do it alone.

Reminds me of my first job. The combination of the urge to prove myself and the enthusiasm that made me get ahead of myself completely. My colleagues joyfully saw me go under. Felt frustrated and alone. Was this really it? My boss pulls me aside for two minutes. 'It's not about you, but about what we can achieve as a team. What is your role within the team? Think about that. You can always come to me.' A valuable lesson. No one can do it alone, and too much egotistical behavior is at the expense of the team's performance. Since then, I look around more, and am much more aware of my role within the team.

Keeping track, being available, and dividing the game. That is my job within this team. Let others score, enjoy the teamwork. That goes wonderfully well in this team. Everybody knows what they need to do, and they are willing

to go the extra mile for someone else. And, without a ball, we all hunt together. No one forsakes the cause. Everybody wants to be indispensable and will do anything to prove his value for the team. That is what makes us so good, and that is exactly how I apply myself nowadays, as the CEO.

The opponent understands that too, and fully goes for it. Even so, they complain just a bit more. Annoyed at each other and the referee. They try to intimidate us with their aggression. Don't respond, stay focused, keep each other on your toes. We become stronger and we get more scoring opportunities.

I'm hit! a full-on tackle on my left knee 'Ahhh... no! Not again!' The captain is with me in an instant. 'Are you alright...? Push through..., we're going to get them, but we need you for that, we can't lose you now!' Nice words, so important to hear. I know that all too well from my work.

True team spirit makes the difference!

Nobody can do it **alone!**



Fair Play. Always!

3. Fair play

The medic leaves the field. The opponent got himself a yellow card. I suppress the pain, I'm angry, but somehow, I'm proud that they have no grip on me. It's a bit better already, these are the matches that matter. I'll show them!

The desire to win forms the basis of success in the game. At football, and at work. How far do I go? The rules of the game are set, but the referee decides what is, and what isn't allowed. That is a matter of trying out, seeking out the limits. A shoulder push is generally allowed, but an elbow goes too far.

Faced with a strong opponent, we must pull out all the stops to win. It is then unavoidable that you will get to the edge, and sometimes even go over it, showing you're there, and you won't let

them walk all over you. That is the basis of success.

At work I also deal with rules that I must keep to. Written and unwritten rules. Obtaining information in a fair way, or honoring commitments correctly. No excuses, but honestly saying what's what. That is our company culture.

If I cheat, it'll eventually work against me. Fair play, always!

The same holds true for an elbow or irresponsible tackle, out of frustration or revenge. In that case I am no longer occupied with winning, but harm only myself and my team.

I seek out the limits but do so within the rules.

Injuries are part of it.

Push through,
but **don't force it!**



4. Injured

It didn't even happen during a match, but at home I fell down the stairs and had an unfortunate landing on my left knee. Stabbing pain and a swollen knee. The doctor advised me to rest. Rest?! I was just selected! I wanted this so badly that after a week of rest, I took the pain as part of the package. Pushing through, with this mentality I conquered a position in the starting lineup. The other side of the coin is that my knee has always remained sensitive.

Reminds me of the difficult moments from my youth, the divorce and the accident. They remain sensitive subjects, especially since I am now confronted with them within my own relationship. Don't give up but ensure a good outcome. Treat the 'injury' by giving it attention and talking about it. Sometimes take some distance and rest. Kick the ball to the stands, ask my teammates to take my position or consult with the coach. 'Take one step back to take two steps forward,' as its often said.

Push through, but don't force it. Then it breaks. My knee was a borderline case. Very different than my head injury in the cup finals. Was stitched on the field, I adamantly wanted to finish the game. Walked around with a headache at the victory lap with the cup, but it didn't bother me afterwards. I'd do it again.

Injuries are part and parcel of the sport, and of life. A matter of falling and getting back up. Bad and good luck. Give specific attention to your injury, but don't let it control you.

My knee occupies my thoughts too much anyway, taking too much of my attention.

The physiotherapist put it simply: "train the surrounding muscles and let go of the knee!"

Play and live freely.

5. My Talent

For as long as I can remember, I've always had a ball with me. That ball was part of me. Dribbling, kick ups, doing nutmegs, it all went with ease. I discovered that when my peers started playing football. We won nearly everything and got a fair number of compliments. Playing in the highest teams. As I got older, I noticed that it took more effort. I was by no means always the ace. That took some getting used to. Next to that, I developed interests for things other than football. Music and Movies were popular in my circle of friends. I started seeing training more as an obligation, and sometimes skipped a few sessions. Nearly without noticing, I focused way too much on the outside world. Spent too much time on my looks and was constantly occupied with social media and my phone. My dream to become a professional football player was slowly relegated to the background.

It was my father who confronted me about this, after he saw a series of my mediocre matches. "What do

you want?" was his simple question. "Do you still really want to become a professional football player, or do you want to play around for fun? Because if you still want the first, it's high time to face it seriously." A crucial moment for my career. I understood exactly what he meant.

A switch was flipped. Training came first, then school and my friends. With discipline, I wholly put my focus on football. Talent alone does not suffice, it's about the development of that talent. I became better and better through focused training. Those free kicks don't enter the goal on their own, it took a long time with a lot of training. Every goal therefore gave me an amazing rush. Every single time, that feeling is the reward for my hard work. Achieving your full potential. A wonderful feeling. Not just for now, but also for later!

Invest in yourself.
Take **extra training** and
attend that extra course.



6. Mentality

Football didn't only bring me fun and success, it did something much more important for me: it shaped my mentality. Through football I discovered what that is. It is my own mindset, my own will.

The conversation with my father changed my mindset regarding football. From trying to win my matches, to becoming a professional football player. A long-term goal that requires a certain mindset. The absolute will to succeed as a football player. This will is what determines my success. Complete dedication, wanting to constantly improve myself. Not getting distracted by everything that crosses your path and not contributing to your goal. Focus.

The same holds true in a match. Wanting to win and doing everything possible to accomplish that. Seeking out the limits. Moving forward, not giving up, and staying positive. Not only is this mindset at the root of my career, it also kept me going during the long

period of my knee injury. Every time I was training the muscles around my knee in the gym, I could feel my mental strength grow. No one will get me down!

I also use this important discovery in my daily work. When the chips are down, or when that promotion didn't go through. Of course, it was tempting to leave and seek my fortune elsewhere, but I remained and persevered. The same counts for my relationship, I trust my mentality, I want things to work out. I don't give up easily.

Despite the painful knee, I just gave a good pass that resulted in a goal. The captain was the first person at my side to congratulate me. 'See, we need you. Good on you for pushing on!' Yeah, I purposely worked on my mentality. It is the basis of my success.

Is the **voice** in your head
your **best friend** or your
worst opponent?





7. My Coach

Believe it or not, but if I had to think of everything myself, I would never have become a successful football player. Of all the important moments in my career, there was always someone who directed me. A coach. Someone who had faith in me and wanted to help me develop my talents. So valuable, that is what every person needs. If you want to do everything yourself, you lose sight of the overall picture. You'll be led too much by the short term, and only see what you want to see.

I was lucky with the coaches that crossed my path. I learnt different things from each one of them. I opened up and felt myself becoming a better football player. That went with its ups and downs, By the way, to be honest, I often didn't agree with them initially. I saw things differently. But their remarks, suggestions and questions made me think. Slowly but surely, I opened up and discovered the value of a coach. Currently, I wouldn't have it any other way.

In my work I also consciously look for people who inspire me and engage in

conversation with them. This makes me grow in wisdom, and I notice the other person enjoys it too. What's better than helping each other grow? It is nice to have a listener and someone who holds a mirror up to you.

During my youth I was used to scoring a lot, and the mid-front position seemed predestined. It was the coach of my new club who saw the playmaker in me, and who shoved me back a line. At first, I wasn't happy with that at all, scoring gave me a rush. The inspiring conversations with my coach made clear how much faith he had in me. Slowly but surely, I started getting used to the idea and growing in my new role.

Now, I wouldn't have it any other way. This is the position in which my qualities can fully blossom. Something I never could have thought of myself.

8. The 12th Man

One of my greatest victories was our home match against the national champions. Even though we were missing three players from the starting lineup, we won with 3-2 in a spectacular match. After the first half, we were lagging behind with a score of 0-2. Here and there you could hear whistling from the stands as we headed towards the dressing rooms. Directly after half-time, the comeback goal was made: 1-2. Things started rolling, the tactical change by the coach worked wonders. The match tilted, and the audience started believing again. 15 minutes before time: 2-2! The whole stadium now had our backs. We grew wings and fought like lions. The winning goal was in the air, you could feel it. I twisted my knee doing a cutting move. Yeah, exactly, the same knee... but I didn't want out yet. Under no circumstances, not for this great audience. Stimulated by the enthusiasm of the fans, I barely felt any pain. On the edge of the penalty zone, I get the ball in front of my left foot completely out of nowhere and I kick: 3-2. The stadium erupted.

I made the winning goal thanks to the 12th man. Without the support of the

audience I would've likely had myself substituted. They literally helped me push my (pain) boundaries. Not only in football does the 12th man play an important role. This actually applies to my entire life. My inner circle, family and friends. People who love me and value me for the person I am. They believe in me, have my best interests at heart, and try to help me wherever possible. Sometimes I find that quite annoying, stubborn as I am, wanting to do it all by myself. In that manner I sell this 12th man short. Relaxation is essential to perform well. That can best be done with the people who have faith in you and want to be there for you.

Due to my busy life, I actually don't realise that enough. I should have more consideration for the 12th man and show my appreciation. Without them, I stand alone.

Appreciate your **family**,
friends and
supporters!





Without **substitution**
there is no **progress!**

9. Substitution!

A moment of goosebumps, 5 minutes before time, the coach gave me an honorable substitution. The audience gave me a standing ovation and I couldn't keep my eyes dry. Teammates applauded, the high-fives flew back and forth. I immediately walked to the dressing room, I didn't want to get too carried away, I wanted to stay true to myself. I sat down in my seat and stared in a daze. My football career was over.

During my career, I hated being substituted with a passion. It felt like failing, I hated it. Why me? I could point at others who weren't feeling the match. But, once I was at home on the sofa, I was able to distance myself and could understand why the coach made that decision. But sometimes, if I didn't understand, I'd approach the coach and ask for an explanation. That made me a much better football player. I could put myself in the coach's shoes, who mainly looked out for the team.

The use of substitution naturally doesn't only apply to matches. You can transfer clubs or change positions. A change always brings about a change in energy, which creates new possibilities. That doesn't always have to be an

improvement, but you don't know that ahead of time. It's important to realise that a substitution causes change, and that is exactly the intention if you're unhappy with the current situation.

Just like that, I changed jobs when I wasn't enjoying myself. I changed positions on the advice of my coach and asked my agent to look for a new club the moment I didn't feel that I was part of the starting lineup.

Looking back, I should've requested a substitution more often, the damage to my knee would have been less and I might have been able to stick around for another season. But hey, I saw that as failing and, being a promising talent, I didn't want to give in.

Important lesson for the second half, don't be afraid of substitution. Without substitution, there is no change!

10. Luck!

I am enormously thankful for my career as a football player. I have lived through incredibly beautiful things and learned a lot. Lessons that will undoubtedly aid me during my second half. In that, I realise that I am, above all, a lucky man. I had the luck of being able to give a ball a decent kick, and I had the luck of meeting the right people at the right time that helped me on my way. I am so thankful for them, I would really have never made it on my own. I realise that all too well. Especially now, looking back, in the dressing room in the pause of my life.

That doesn't occupy your thoughts at all during the match. You are competitive, you give it your all, and you are annoyed by everything that goes wrong. Wrong passes, bad referee, sensitive knee. Only when the ball bounces off the inner side of the goalpost, straight into the net, do you realise for a moment that luck chose the right side of the post. It's in! And we continue straight onwards. You win with 1-0, you're placed for the next round of the tournament and you eventually win the finals, and you can hold the cup above your head. But what if that one ball landed just on the outside of the pole...?

Sometimes the odds are in your favor, other times they're not. That's life, you have to deal with it. The only thing I can change is to open myself to that luck and live in such a way that luck is able to find me. In doing so, I follow my gut instinct. If it's correct, I do what my gut tells me, and I wait and see what crosses my path. Before the second surgery on my knee, I instantly had a bad feeling but everyone, except for my dad, talked me into making my comeback as soon as possible. A medical procedure was necessary for that. It took a wrong turn. My career was hanging by a thread. 'Pure bad luck,' the treating physician later said. 'If only I had followed my gut instinct,' I thought.

My mentality was my strength back then. I didn't let it get me down, but I took responsibility for my actions as a football player. I wanted to return, but healthy and in good spirits. When I decided to do that I came across the right therapist that helped me wonderfully in this matter. I was truly lucky with that.

I don't know whether you can force luck but what I do know, is that you can 'invite' luck by making a decision and connecting it to a specific action. Because there's one thing I know for sure: there is no luck without action!



The more I use my **talent**,
the **luckier** I get!



Enjoy! Live, learn and let go.

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11. The Final Whistle

Now, nearing the end of my story, I would like to make a confession. Even though I had great fun playing football, I often longed for the referee to look at his watch, bring the whistle to his lips and bring the match to an end with those three familiar sounds. As I got older, that happened more and more, especially if the score was in our favour.

Sometimes when there were still 15 minutes left of the match my thoughts were already in the dressing room. When there was still 1/6th of the game yet to be played, and anything could happen, my teammates kept me on my toes by telling me the truth. This honesty was crucial as I often experienced that it all comes down to the end of the match. Matches in which I had given up hope, but also matches in which I thought that we had already won but this was not so. The result after 90 Minutes is decisive. It's good to realise that, especially in that last phase.

I also see that in my work, I started to lose focus near the end. A project that is nearly completed, but where something goes wrong in the final stage. Or an order which I think is in, but then it unexpectedly goes to a competitor. 'Pay attention Siama, a match lasts 90 Minutes!' In those moments I can still hear my coach in my head.

I will now bring the most beautiful, precious and educational memories of the first half of my life into the second half of it. This second half is about to start. I am ready for the second half of my life, which looks to be very promising and very interesting. And I will give it my all until the 90th minute. I am now ready to be the coach of my own life. Insha'Allah

'GO!'

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Thank you

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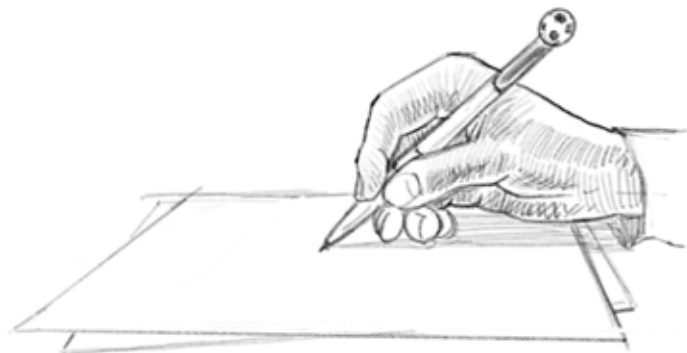


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P A R T N E R S



Eddy de Heij

bio



Eddy de Heij has more than 20 years of experience as an entrepreneur. He is active as an investor, founder and advisor for various companies. Currently, he focusses on Crypto-Currency, AI/VR, Big Data and Blockchain projects. De Heij is also CEO of the ZO Media Group.

He advises a select number of startups worldwide, such as Vibby (New York City), Goin (Barcelona, Winner of the Most Innovative Fintech Award 2018/2019), FortKnoxster (Gibraltar), BitBook (Ireland), Yume Capital (Tokyo) Muster VC (Barcelona) and DataEnzo (Amsterdam).

In 2015 he wrote the book *De Bovengever*. *De Bovengever* is a collection of stories based on his experiences with startups.

In 2016, the International edition of *De Bovengever* was met with much enthusiasm.

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Eddy de Heij is available for presenting seminars on 90Minutes. All motivational chapters in this booklet, along with many more experiences, are addressed in a special manner during a 90Minutes seminar.

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