

## BOOK EXCERPT

*One of the best things about Ken's dad being back from the war was having him around to share Ken's passion for sports. They would go to Giants, Yankees, and Dodgers games every chance they could. Ken began sending self-addressed, stamped envelopes to his favorite players, asking for their autographs. The hobby became a lifelong passion. Jackie Robinson, Willie Mays, Joe DiMaggio, Mickey Mantle, Ted Williams, and Satchel Paige are just a few of the legends who contributed signatures to Ken's autograph book.*

*Ted Blanchard—the Navy officer who had retained the respect of his men while commanding them into dangerous conditions in the Pacific—didn't waste opportunities to share leadership lessons with Ken, even when watching sports.*

*Ted imparted two of Ken's earliest leadership lessons to him when he took his son to his first major league baseball game at the old Polo Grounds stadium in upper Manhattan. Ken was just seven years old, and the New York Giants were playing the St. Louis Cardinals. Ken's father wanted him to see two players from the Cardinals in particular—Enos "Country" Slaughter and Stan "Stan the Man" Musial. "These guys will teach you something about leadership and values," Ken's dad told him.*

*Ken remembers seeing Enos Slaughter hit a grounder that went straight to the pitcher. Nevertheless, Slaughter ran to first base like his life depended on it. "See how he hustles?" his father said. "If you're going to do something in life, be like Enos Slaughter and give it everything you've got."*

*The other player, Stan Musial, had just returned from Pearl Harbor, where he'd spent the entire 1945 season serving in the US Navy. The fact that Musial was a great hitter wasn't really the point.*

*"He's a perfect gentleman," Ken's father told him. "Even when the umpire makes a bad call, you'll never see Musial complain."*

*That first major league baseball game left a lasting impression on Ken. He learned the importance of applying effort, the way Enos Slaughter did, and respecting others, the way Stan Musial did. But more than that, he learned a key lesson that would inform his future career: leadership wasn't about having a title or a position. After all, Slaughter and Musial were baseball players, not presidents or kings. Yet how they behaved had an impact on others. The lesson Ken learned that day was this: by behaving in a way that influenced others, anyone could be a leader.*

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