"Those who don't learn from history are doomed to repeat it." In his latest, Cris Sykes says that Larry Dolan, Mark Shapiro, and Eric Wedge all made some mistakes last season that they hopefully learned from. Sykes singles out those mistakes and lays out his blueprint of the perfect off-season in this excellent piece.

"Those who do not learn from history, are doomed to repeat it."

-George Santayana

It's finally time to put the Indians disappointing 2006 baseball season behind us.

Like all seasons, there is no reason to spend too much time reflecting on what happened, unless there are some lessons that can be learned. Thankfully for those of us that love to write about our Indians, there are plenty of lessons to be learned, by just about every part of the organization.

I'll start with the favorite target of my angst, Manager Eric Wedge. Hopefully Eric will take some time over the next few months to learn from his mistakes and that will lead to less bashing from fans like me. The first lesson for Wedge to learn would be to have at least some tolerance for those players that might not fit his personality profile. Most people that are in the position to manage other people (whether it is on a baseball field or at a McDonalds) know that not everyone is the same. You sometimes have to deal with imperfect employees, that is what makes you a manager. There would be no reason to have you if all 25 players were perfect.

The next area of improvement for Eric would be to spend some time with your guys on fundamentals of the game. Most players in this day and age do not want to give up at-bats to move a runner over. Unfortunately for them, this is a requirement of having a solid team. If players are unwilling to perform this task, maybe they need to lose some at bats in another way. While base-running might be boring to work on in March, you might want to spend a little more time on it in 2007. I know we are in the time of "Moneyball" and the sacrifice bunt is the equivalent of taking your cousin to prom, but I am positive there are times and situations where it is worthwhile.

To the players, can we please stop acting like being in the Major Leagues is a job? Why does it look like you guys are not having any fun? My real job sucks, trust me, but I have more fun in one day at work than you guys appeared to have all season. This should not be the case. Having fun is relaxing and enjoyable. Give it a shot, I bet you'll like it. The biggest example of this has to be Victor Martinez. I know you had a tough year behind the plate, but I remember you coming up here with that infectious attitude and the different high-five for every one of your various teammates.

The biggest history lesson needs to be taken my Mr. Mark Shapiro, GM of the Tribe. Mark, you have one job this off-season and it's to make a splash. Not a perfect dive splash, but a Ted Washington cannon ball off the high dive type of splash.

There are a few fish swimming around out there in the free agent pool. Let’s try not to finish second for each of them this time around. In 2006, you had this belief that free agents would come to Cleveland because of the atmosphere. You thought they would come here just because we were doing things the right way. Unfortunately, this is not true. What players want is money and security. That extra year, while it might not fit your long-term goals, it will likely be necessary. Another couple million bucks might be the difference between Bob Howry and Danny Graves.

How do you go about making a splash? Hit early. Show everyone out there that you are a player and mean business. I believe target number one must be a power hitting right-handed bat to protect Travis Hafner. I think that as soon as you are allowed to contact free agents, you should be on the phone and into a very meaningful discussion with the agent for Carlos Lee. Please, do whatever it takes to make this happen. If someone else offers 4 years, $50 million, go with 5 for 60 or 4 for 52.

You could probably roll into the 2007 without doing too much else to the offense. One more tweak might be to add a second basemen that fills in the second slot in the order. I think Mark Loretta was made to bat second in this order. If he can be gotten relatively cheap - I think you could feel pretty good about running this lineup out there all year:

1. Grady Sizemore
2. Mark Loretta
3. Travis Hafner
4. Carlos Lee
5. Victor Martinez
6. Casey Blake
7. Jhonny Peralta
8. Ryan Garko
9. Andy Marte

With the starting rotation pretty well set, it would be time to search for some bullpen help. Without having a true big time closer out there, you might have to dig deep and take a chance

or two. Free agent relief pitchers are very fickle. Trying to predict what any of this year's class will do is not an easy task. However, there are a few names that would be pretty intriguing to me. One would be JC Romero. You remember him, the guy that used to kill us from Minnesota. Well, he headed out west and completely imploded, but maybe coming back to the AL Central will help him regain his form. The surest bet out there is probably Chad Bradford, but I find his availability to be pretty unrealistic.

Of course, if you do not like the looks of the free agent relievers, maybe there are some available on the trade front. Rumors are rampant that Huston Street may be available. I would probably take the time to call out to Oakland and find out. If we had to give up a starting pitcher to get a legitimate closer, then maybe we could even go a little overboard and check into what Jason Schmidt has planned for the next couple years.

Last, but certainly not least, comes Mr. Dolan. I know you have said this would be a different off-season in terms of the budget. I thought that was supposed to be last year, but I will take your word for it again this year. Please do not let all the fans down.

The core of a very good team already plays their home games at Jacobs Field. What this team requires is some tweaking and fine-tuning. Clean up some on-the-field issues. It is time to show those core guys that their time is now. Bringing in a couple of the bigger free agents to plug the couple of holes that exist could go a long way to adding some spark to the core group.

Possibly even more important, a big splash in the free agent market will reinvigorate a fan base that is begging for a reason to fall back in love with the Tribe.