

L4 COACHING

*It's not the will to win that matters—everyone
has that. It's the will to prepare to win that
matters.*

-Paul "Bear" Bryant

Presented by the Wyoming Coaches Association

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Level Four Coaching

The goal of Level Four Coaching is to create a positive environment for the coaches and student athletes of the Great State of Wyoming.

This is what we believe:

Level Four Coaching seeks to empower Wyoming coaches toward careers marked by high achievement, personal responsibility and longevity in a diverse and sometimes challenging work environment.

Advocating for and supporting Wyoming Coaches demonstrates our commitment to the success and well-being of coaches.



The Level Four Coaching program is built on four core principles or levels:

Preparation – Each coach must have opportunities to prepare for their career. Opportunities are provided by the Wyoming Coaches Association (WCA) and its sister organization, the Wyoming Coaches Foundation (WCF). This manual is evidence of the importance we place on proper preparation for a successful and satisfying coaching career.

Support – We believe coaching is a most rewarding career. However, as in any career, there are good days and bad days. It is critical to be supported in challenging times. The WCA maintains a select panel of coaches dedicated to providing support and/or intervention for any coach requesting assistance. A current list of these coaches is found in this booklet.

Continuing Education – Nothing remains the same for long. Sports are constantly being modified and innovated; staying current is a key to being successful. Many opportunities are available throughout the year, but few are better than the annual WCF Coaches Clinic. Each summer, speakers from around our state and around the nation come to our clinic to provide coaches with timely and pertinent information on coaching all Wyoming high school sports.

Success – This is defined in various ways in coaching. Often it is in win/loss records, but it is much more than that. Coaches build strong relationships with athletes and parents, they help student-athletes achieve in school and they provide a positive, energetic school environment. Successful coaches help create successful schools and communities. Our goal is to provide a program to enable every coach to be successful.

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WCA Mentor Group

The Wyoming Coaches Association is committed to providing all coaches with the support they may need at any time in their careers. We are fortunate to have many successful coaches in each sport who can offer advice, ideas, or their own experiences to assist a fellow coach. If they cannot provide you with the help you need, they can direct you to a person who can.

One of the most fundamental supports a coach can have, especially a beginning coach, is to have a mentor. The importance of this cannot be overstated; a mentor can provide support during the first crucial years in one's career.

So, how do you go about identifying a mentor? Here are some ideas that may help you. First, it is important to work with someone you can trust. A good mentor is interested in you and your career and willing to help you in whatever way they can. Also, it's not critical that your mentor be in the same sport(s) you may be coaching. Coaching is a profession that spans many different sports and activities, and good coaching is found in all areas.



As noted above, the Wyoming Coaches Association has sport representatives in each WHSAA endorsed sport. These men and women are advocates for their sport, but also for the coaches within their sport. They can help with practice plans, game preparation, various policies or parent interaction to just name a few. You will find a current list of mentors on the WCA website located at: <http://www.wcaonline.net/index.asp>

Another obvious place to begin is within your own coaching staff. A successful head coach or a long time assistant are likely candidates. These coaches are well acquainted with the local resources and politics that often affect coaches.

Another local option can be retired coaches in your community. These coaches often have extra time to devote to mentoring a young coach. These people are often ones who have "seen it all and done it all". Their accumulated coaching wisdom can be extremely valuable to any coach regardless of their level of experience.

However you choose to go about it, be sure to locate someone you can talk with and get advice, especially early in your career. An avoidable mistake can sometimes turn into a major obstacle to developing a successful coaching career.

Introduction



As a coach, you have the unique opportunity to establish a special relationship with student-athletes. Coaches are role models for members of their team. Your actions have far-reaching effects on the lives and values of your players. In the end, the greatest satisfaction a coach can receive from the profession is to see their student-athletes become successful, productive, and contributing citizens in our society. Always remember that you have an inherent responsibility to conduct yourself in a manner that brings credit to this great profession. Be proud to be called "Coach."

All of us dream of victories, conference and state championships, and the thrill of victory. The reality is there will be many setbacks along the way. The true test of our character is not what we do during the victories, but how we handle the hard times. While we realize the value of playing to win, the fact remains that in all successful coaches and interscholastic programs, values learned are far more important than victories achieved. It is essential that we as coaches see ourselves as the teachers of those life-long values.

The Purpose of this Manual

Being the coach of an athletic team is a tremendous responsibility and it provides many opportunities to influence student-athletes. As a role model for members of the team, your actions have far-reaching effects on the lives and values of those you teach. Therefore, all who are called "Coach" must be reminded that they have an awesome responsibility and a tremendous opportunity to help shape the lives of those they lead in a positive manner.

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The sole purpose of this work is to assist coaches in becoming the best they can be in providing student-athletes with a meaningful learning experience that will be with them the rest of their lives. The information presented, while valuable to all coaches, is directed toward those who are inexperienced coaches.

Structure and Organization

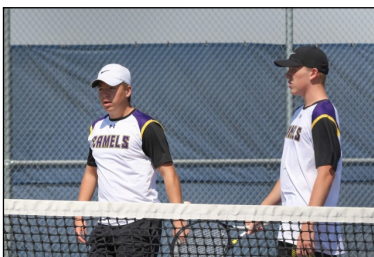
Since this effort represents the views of dozens of successful coaches and administrators, no attempt has been made to give credit to any specific individuals. The credit belongs to your Association. The WCA has sponsored and coordinated the production of this work. The manual is designed in a manner that you will find practical and efficient. It is intended to be a reference work with an emphasis on doing all the things that are necessary to field a championship team while maintaining impeccable ethical standards. Since it is impossible to adequately analyze all the X's and O's associated with all sports, this publication purposely leaves this to other works. The reader can be assured that the contents have been time-tested and utilized by numerous state champions and members of the WCA Hall of Fame.

Use of the Manual

A comprehensive Table of Contents is included to enable you to access the topic that is of interest to you. It is suggested that you browse the manual to become familiar with the resources available. As the need arises you can examine the contents in greater detail. While reading, keep in mind that the advice presented has been compiled from information presented by some of the most successful coaches, teachers, and administrators.

Resource People

All of us have had mentors along the way who assisted us in becoming effective teachers and coaches. Consequently, those who have been helped by others feel they have an obligation to keep the circle unbroken. In this manual, you will find a list of experienced coaches who have volunteered to make themselves available as mentors. They represent a cross section of outstanding coaches in the state.



To tap into their knowledge and experience, all you have to do is contact any of them and set up a meeting, or carry on a dialogue through e-mail or by telephone. Take the ball and run with it!

Benefits of Joining the WCA

There are many reasons why every coach in Wyoming should be a member of the WCA. Perhaps the most important is that the WCA provides every coach with numerous opportunities for professional development. It is incumbent on all of us to be the best that we can be. We interact with our nation's most valuable resource, impressionable young men and women who are of that formative age where positive role models are necessary. The WCA provides you with the tools to help build America's future. Put them to good use. Below is a list of additional benefits associated with joining the WCA:

Members:

1. Are eligible to be nominated and selected for the annual Association's Head Coach of the Year, Assistant Coach of the Year, Junior High Coach of the Year, Regional and National Coaching awards.
2. May vote for nominees for the various Association Coach of the Year awards.
3. Are eligible and may be selected to be all-star head or assistant all-star coaches.
4. May nominate and vote for the various class specific all-state awards.
5. May serve on the selection committee for the all-star teams.
6. Children are eligible and may be selected for the Association's Scholarship.
7. Are eligible to nominate their athletes for the Association's Academic Awards.
8. Are eligible and may have the opportunity to serve on the Association's Board of Directors.
9. Are eligible to receive 20, 30, and 40 year Service Awards.
10. Will receive the newsletters from the Association four times per year.
11. May purchase special coaches passes (PURPLE PASS) to all culminating WHSAA sporting events. This Purple Pass (Color changes annually) may ONLY be purchased at the Wyoming Coaches Association Clinic held each summer.
12. Have \$2 million limited liability insurance coverage.
13. Are eligible for University of Wyoming/Wyoming Coaches Association complimentary Football and Basketball tickets (see www.wcaonline.net for details).
14. Are eligible to be nominated and selected to the Association's Hall of Fame.
15. Are eligible to be nominated and selected as the annual recipient of the Associations Honor Award and the Bill Farthing Distinguished Service Award.

Career Coaching

So, why do you coach? Do you coach because you love your sport? Of course you do. Do you coach because you love to teach or have a passion to teach what you know to others? Of course you do. Is it because you love working with young people, to see them grow in their skills, maturity, and in lessons in life? Of course it is.

Is it because you have had a negative experience in sport and feel you can do it better? Possibly true. Do you coach hoping you will make it big and move up in your profession? Having the dream to make it big is fine, just don't let it consume you or be your only reason.

Do you coach because you were a star athlete and can't get away from the game? Of course not. Do you want to coach because you stuck your foot in your mouth long enough and feel it's your turn? Let's hope that's not it! Will you coach to instill those great qualities in athletes that we say they should learn from sport? Will you work to instill qualities such as sportsmanship, honesty, hard work, teamwork, perseverance, dedication, sacrifice, etc.? You will do your best to do so! Will you coach to build those trusting relationships with our young athletes that we so desperately need? These relationships can demonstrate a genuine caring for people and have the potential to create a bond of trust that perhaps is never broken. This is the kind of trust that gets an athlete to do for you and the team what they aren't willing to do for many others.

Having an influence on young people's lives is powerful and that's why we need to know why we coach. There are so many reasons why we might coach. Many are good reasons and some may not be so good. If we're going to be called by one of the most respected words one can hear, "**COACH**," we had better know why we are doing this and trust it is for all the right reasons! Coaches, we need you! Our young athletes need YOU! They need great people who are knowledgeable and dedicated, willing to give up their time to build positive learning relationships with them. This will never change.

Another thing that hasn't changed is that whatever the amount of money raised, it never seems to be enough to fill all needs. Be prepared to lend a hand with fundraising events and various youth activities in your community. In spite of all the changes in X's and O's, the teenagers eager to join a team and work toward a common goal have remained constant. These young athletes range in sizes and certainly in talent. They have different attitudes, backgrounds, strengths and weaknesses.

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Let's grasp the opportunity to teach these players some of the never changing truths, such as honesty, loyalty, respect for others and for oneself, the importance of family, the love of their siblings, the importance of attitude and the satisfaction of helping others, to name just a few. Take time to talk to these young adults about these subjects and include these conversations into your practice schedules. Build time into your practice and make time before and after practice to discuss "life lessons."



Do you ever meet and talk with your team about a simple concept such as "honesty"? These young athletes will carry such lessons with them forever. Provide time when you can meet as a team to discuss particular topics and ask individuals for their opinions regarding these issues. Bring back alumni, who have a certain message to convey from their own life experiences to speak to your team. You will hear parents say over and over, "**They will listen to you. You are their coach.**" As coaches, we need to recognize that fact and use this platform well.

Assistant Coaches

The role of an assistant coach should be carried out with the following characteristics in mind.

1. **Loyalty** - An assistant coach must always support the program and the head coach. The support of the head coach and his/her philosophy is necessary for the entire program, from top to bottom, to be successful. Too often the farther a coach is from the top, the easier it is to dismiss ideas or not follow through with the plan of the head coach. Our first priority must be the success of the teams at the top. Therefore, avoid the temptation of "doing your own thing." Learn exactly what is expected and do your best to carry out the plan.
2. **Teamwork** - Coaches, athletes, parents, and the community are all important members of the team. Chemistry among coaches is equally important, if not more important, as the chemistry among the athletes on our team. Athletes make a commitment to the program. Be sure to reciprocate by doing the same and by giving them support as needed (i.e. in school, athletics, etc.). In addition, it is essential that we support the parents of our athletes.

After all, they are allowing us to be part of their child's life. Acknowledge and appreciate that trust. We must be consistently fair with student-athletes and we must believe in ourselves and the philosophy of the program. The head coach will always support the assistant coach who is questioned by parents as long as that assistant has followed through with the plan of the head coach.

3. **Communication** - At times, drills, philosophies, responsibilities, and expectations may be unclear. A simple solution is to ask the head coach. A coach that asks questions will be much more successful than the coach who pretends to know everything. Inevitably, the coach who pretends to know may make bad decisions that negatively affect the program. A great coach is a great teacher and all good teachers know that questions are at the root of learning.



4. **Education** - Since life-long learning is essential for personal growth, we must convey to our student-athletes that we are as concerned about their success in the classroom as we are in competition. Help athletes be good students by stressing school first. Your role as a coach involves teaching athletes the benefits of competition, discipline, teamwork and commitment. Coaching is a vehicle to impart these life-skills in young men and women. Winning is important, but only when the appropriate ingredients are employed.
5. **Respect** - Self-respect is essential in order to show respect for others. Make positive choices in your life that will enable you to be the best coach you can be. Respect your family by scheduling in time to be with them. Respect your fellow coaches. As our Association grows, so does the number of quality individuals around us. Take advantage of the opportunity to surround yourself with positive people. Respect the athletes. The players give us everything they have from the beginning to the end of the season. Allow them the opportunity and they will earn your respect. Respect the power and influence athletics has in the lives of our student-athletes.
6. **Be a Teacher** - All coaches are teachers and the practice field is your classroom. Make sure your knowledge of the sport and the dynamics of teaching others continues to grow. Fortunately, the WCA provides you with opportunities for both at the annual summer clinic.

7. **Volunteer your Time** - Regardless of the level you are coaching, volunteer your time at the varsity practices, scouting opponents, tying together loose ends for the head coach, or maybe taking stats during the varsity game. You will gain respect and knowledge from the experienced coaching staff. Maintain perspective in life and keep close tabs on your priorities. Support each other and work together to give our student-athletes the best possible opportunities to be successful.

Preparing to Become a Head Coach

In the Appendix of this manual, you will find a checklist of everything you must do to prepare to be a head coach. This section on preparation goes into more detail on some of the key components of effective communication with your student athletes. Coaching is an evolutionary process, so communicating effectively with your athletes is a fundamental key to success and perhaps the most challenging part of your job. How do you know your players are comprehending what you are saying? Every time you speak, it's critical that your audience understands, remembers, and takes the appropriate action. When you're speaking to young athletes that is a major challenge.

*"Success is what happens when preparation meets opportunity."
Vince Lombardi*

The first step to getting through to your athletes is to get their attention immediately - so they will want to listen. The best way to accomplish this is by answering their silent question. "What's in it for me?" This applies to everyone, but it's especially true for student-athletes. Always remember, people do things for their reasons, not your reasons. Combine what they want to hear with what you want them to know. This gives them a reason to listen, rather than tune you out. You must learn to adjust your speaking style for a young audience of today in the following ways:

1. Your mannerisms need to be relaxed and you must keep constant eye contact.
2. Your vocabulary must paint pictures and you need to avoid outdated phrases, profanity and offensive language.
3. Your speeches should be broken into shorter segments.
4. Your content should use multiple examples, anecdotes and stories to reinforce your facts.
5. Your clarity is extremely important. You must connect both intellectually and emotionally. Speak to their hearts.
6. Ask follow-up questions. "What have we talked about here?" "How are we going to do this?" "What do we expect from you?"

Communication is more effective between you and your athletes when you develop an open communication policy. Build trust by being a good listener. Let them know that your door is always open to discuss their concerns. Athletes look up to you because you're an authority figure. Sometimes all they need is a sounding board – and their performance will improve when they've had the chance to express themselves. The athlete will feel more comfortable approaching you when you show interest in their life other than just on the field, court or in the locker room.

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When an athlete asks difficult questions, use the opportunity to get your message across. Recognize and acknowledge their emotional position before moving on. They have a right to their opinion and you need to acknowledge that, whether you agree or not. Bridge to your point of view with an easy phrase like, "Let's look at this another way." or "The key issue here seems to be..." Demonstrate respect for their perspective while putting emphasis on your own.

Clearly and concisely state your point of view. With young people, the fewer words, the more effective you are. Find ways to quickly make your point. If you talk too long, you might sound like you're lecturing or nagging. There was a

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time when athletes did what a coach said because of the authority invested in the position. Today they ask: "Why? What does it mean to me? How do I fit into the picture?" They no longer follow what you say simply because you're "the Coach."

Coaching as a Career

Every individual must decide their short range, intermediate and long range goals in the coaching profession. Most of us are classroom teachers in addition to coaching. Therefore, it is imperative that we consider our teaching responsibilities when interviewing for any coaching position. You will spend most of your time in the classroom. Your primary job should be a positive experience, otherwise the days will be very long. Veteran coaches encourage you to consider these factors when seeking a head coaching position

1. What are your coaching goals?

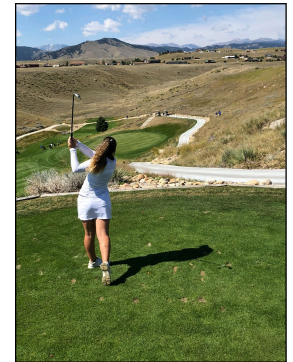
- General Thoughts:** If you are an assistant, are you content being an assistant? Do you need to be a head coach? How important is winning to you as a coach? Is

developing young people into good people important? Do you have a coaching philosophy? If so, what is it?

- Career Specific Thoughts:** Would you be content with a job where it would be difficult to consistently field a winner? Do you want to coach at a small, medium or large high school? What are you willing to do to continue to grow as a coach year after year?

2. What coaching route will you take?

- General Thoughts:** Some people prefer to begin their career as a head coach at a small school and work their way toward a larger school. Others have found it rewarding to stay at a smaller school their entire career. Perhaps you prefer being an assistant for a number of years in order to possibly be the next head coach at that school? The important thing is to do what is best for you and your family rather than doing what others think you should do.
- Career Specific Thoughts:** Make sure you are ready for the head coaching position before you make the move. Taking a head job in a horrible situation may damage a career. It is usually better to be an assistant in a successful program and remain patient while waiting for a more attractive opportunity.



3. Do you enjoy your current job?

- General Thoughts:** Do you enjoy your teaching position? (You do this nine months of the year.) Do you enjoy the other teachers in your department? Do you work well with the administration? Do you enjoy the culture of your school? Do you enjoy the kids you are teaching? Are you earning enough money?
- Career Specific Thoughts:** Do you enjoy your coaching staff? Do you enjoy the players you are coaching? Is athletics important at your school? Is the administration supportive of athletics?

4. Would you be happier somewhere else?

- General Thoughts:** Would it be easier to teach at a different school? Do you want to teach at a larger or smaller school? Is money the most important variable? Is job satisfaction the most important variable? Does location play a factor? Does family play a factor?
- Career Specific Thoughts:** Why do you want to leave your current job? Analyze the positives and negatives of your current job and write them down on paper. How could these affect you in another place?

5. Do you really want that new job?

- a. **General Thoughts:** Once you apply for a head position, you need to investigate all the variables involved with that job. Acquire information about the administration, community, school, and its culture. Look at the growth potential of the school district. Is it growing? Is it declining? Is it landlocked? Is the main industry struggling or thriving?
- b. **Career Specific Thoughts:** Why did the previous coach leave? Answers include retirement, firing, another job, etc. Talk with other coaches in the conference about the position. How does the school's size rank in comparison to other conference schools? What is the athletic tradition? Are you following a successful or an unsuccessful coach? What is the staff situation? Does the community support athletics? Does your school and community support off-season and out of season athlete development?

6. Prepare a pre-interview game plan.

- a. **General Thoughts:** Develop a resume that will assist you in your job hunt. Call on favors and have influential people make phone calls that will help you get the job. Do you know friends of the athletic director or principal who will help you? Attend an athletic event and meet the AD and principal in person. Do your best to find out who is making the final decision for the position.



7. Have an interview game plan.

- a. **General Thoughts:** Communicate the importance of working with kids. Make sure the interviewers know that you enjoy teaching a great deal. Inquire about the curriculum of your specific discipline. Emphasize your ability to be a team player within the department and school. Have an educational and discipline philosophy prepared.
- b. **Career Specific Thoughts:** As a younger coach, it is important to adjust to the expectations of the school administrators. As you gain experience and have established yourself, let them know what you expect and they can decide. Unless you are desperate, it is better to find a good fit rather than attempt to adjust to an approach contrary to your belief system. Express your philosophies! What core values are important to you as part of a great program? How are you going to sell yourself to the committee? There is a line between confidence and arrogance. You must show a level of confidence without coming across as an arrogant coach.

8. Question the committee members.

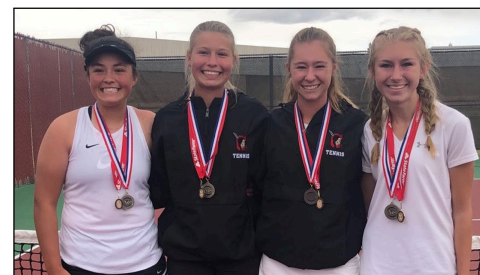
- a. **General Thoughts:** Have questions ready for the committee at the end of the interview. Ask them about the teaching positions. Inquire about their educational

and discipline philosophies. Be sure to determine the stability of your teaching position.

- b. **Career Specific Thoughts:** Budget, staff, athletic philosophy, fundraising opportunities, and booster club are crucial aspects of an athletic program that should be discussed with the committee.

9. Final thoughts

- a. **General Thoughts:** Before accepting any new position, make sure you know the answers to these questions: How important is it that we win? Who is going to evaluate me? How will I be evaluated? What are the expectations of this coaching position? Why do I want to be the coach here? In addition, have questions ready for the interview committee: What is the philosophy of the AD? How will evaluations be handled? What is the chain of command?



Coach As A Leader

The Art of Leadership

What is Leadership?

Literally hundreds of books have been written about leadership, and each offers its own definition. Authors agree that individual leadership begins with making good decisions that lead to peak performance. Team leadership refers to helping others make positive decisions that benefit the overall performance of the team. In short, the coach as a leader assists the rest of the team to perform to their full potential.

Coaches provide opportunities for players to excel by challenging them to transcend previous levels of performance. Through motivation and inspiration, expectations are raised until the bar is set at a new height for each athlete. This results in a win-win for all coaches and players.



Key components of leadership.

- Without leadership, we are lost.
- Leaders are made not born.
- Leadership skills can be developed.
- Leadership is often the difference between success and failure.
- Leadership is everyone's responsibility

Why do I need to be a leader?

- What's more important than teaching others so they (and you) will be more successful in empowering all players to succeed in their world?
- What's more important than following through on your commitment to coaches, players, and parents to provide each individual with the best experience possible?
- What's more important than setting a good example for others? This includes administration, faculty, staff, students and parents?
- It's fun and important to be a positive leader!

What makes a good leader?

In order to best understand effective, ethical leadership, it is valuable to examine the lives of great leaders and analyze the characteristics they possess. One central theme is that they are all skilled at making the lives of those around them better. Honesty and integrity are not negotiable; these qualities are the foundation of positive leadership. In order to lead our coaches and players, we must first earn their trust. In any relationship, people will ask **three questions**:

- Do you care about me?
- Can I trust you?
- Can I count on you?

This is especially true in the field of education where teachers have the tremendous responsibility of interacting with young people for the entire school year. During these formative years, teachers often have a significant amount of influence on the character and personality development of their students. We must have a high regard for trust and do everything possible to maintain impeccable professional standards.

"I don't think much of a man who is not wiser today than he was yesterday"

Abraham Lincoln

How to be a Good Leader

1. Lead by example: A coach emphasizes and demonstrates respect, as well as the values of the team.
2. Emphasize that giving 100% in practice, games, and in life is important
3. Encourage athletes to represent themselves, their family and their school in positive ways.
4. Help athletes overcome adversity, i.e. those who struggle with losses, are frustrated by not being a starter, low self-motivation, etc.



The five “A’s” of Coaching Leadership

Approachable – Listen to what others have to say. Make yourself accessible to players and parents and invite them to discuss what is on their mind.

Accepting – Keep an open mind. Great ideas may come from a wide variety of people – players, secretaries, parents, coaches, teachers and administrators.

Acknowledging – Recognize the contributions of others. Give praise when appropriate and thank others for their cooperation.

Accountable – Be responsible for yourself and your team.

Adaptable – Change is a challenge. Constantly reassess practice and game management and your coaching methods.

Signs of a leader in trouble!

- ☐ Lacks imagination.
- ☐ Has personal problems.
- ☐ Lacks organization.
- ☐ Loses composure.
- ☐ Unwilling to take risks.
- ☐ Is inflexible.
- ☐ Resists change.
- ☐ Has poor understanding of people.
- ☐ Is insecure.
- ☐ Is overly defensive.
- ☐ Is a chronic complainer.
- ☐ Loses temper.
- ☐ Has poor time management.
- ☐ Lacks teamwork skills.

“Always remember ... Goliath was a 40 point favorite over David.”

— *Shug Jordan, Auburn*

Excellent leaders understand basic human needs!

Paul “Bear” Bryant, the outstanding football coach at the University of Alabama, said there are five things winning team members need to know:

Players must know what is expected of them. This will be clearly explained the first day of practice.

Players must understand that each will be given the opportunity to be successful.

Players must be kept informed of their progress.

Players must be aware they will get assistance as needed.

Players must know they will be rewarded consistent with their performance.

Team leadership means setting a positive example for players and influencing them to cooperate to build the best possible team. Coaches who are leaders bring out the best in their players by gaining trust through effective communication and mutual respect. Master coaches possess the skills of leadership and management and know when to employ each. Management skills are much easier to learn and are often associated with keeping order. Leadership skills take time to develop and are learned through experience.

“Be more concerned with your character than with your reputation. Your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are.”

John Wooden

Using Authority

No one stirs up the feelings of others quite as strongly as people in authority. However, as a head coach you are in a position of authority and must take charge in order to meet the challenges of leadership. Acting with authority to accomplish team goals is essential. Effective and practical team management requires coaches to responsibly and prudently fulfill the role of being positive authority figures. When you use authority, you assert your leadership and your credibility. Following are a number of simple but effective ideas for acting with authority:

- **Keep your personal life and problems to yourself. When you’re with the team,**

concentrate on your responsibilities as head coach.

- Give short, simple orders and act as if you expect them to be obeyed without question.
- React immediately and firmly to actions that are not acceptable to you. If you don't respond, it will be perceived as tacit approval.
- Accept success humbly, but with the attitude that you expect success.
- Make requests distinctly, using clear and concise communication.
- Don't try to force your players to always act instantly. Give them time to gather and process their thoughts.
- Manage players warmly and encouragingly without being a dictator.

Acting in an authoritative manner is a skill and like any skill, it must be practiced. If you don't feel comfortable with these methods, don't use them, you will only sound unconvincing.

"Leaders aren't born they are made. And they are made just like anything else, through hard work. And that's the price we'll have to pay to achieve that goal, or any goal."
Vince Lombardi

How do you measure up as a leader?

The leadership checklist in the appendix provides coaches with the opportunity to determine their capacity for leadership. A successful coach offers these time-tested leadership qualities:

1. Leadership is a "serving" relationship that results in facilitating an athlete's development.
2. When leading, be honest. Players look for coaches to provide decisive, strong leadership and to honestly assess their talent and progress.
3. Coaches who do not convey their honest feelings to players risk the establishment of a confusing learning environment.
4. The role of a coach is to give direction. If he/she cannot clearly define what is important to them or what they value, they hinder success.
5. Inconsistency or wavering on rules leads to mistrust.
6. Establishing a credible "open-door" policy demonstrates a willingness to listen. Listening to valid complaints or suggestions enhances players' respect and is an essential component of effective leadership.

7. Strong leadership doesn't allow for double standards. If coaches want players to act in a certain manner, they should do the same.
8. Strong leadership demands removing emotions from decision making and not "shying away" from making tough decisions.



Building a Program

One of the biggest challenges in heading the high school program is organizing your staff. Often, because of contractual commitments, you might have assistant coaches with whom you have had no previous contact. Therefore, it is essential that you have a Job Description for each coach at every level. The enrollment of the school and commitment from the administration will play big roles in determining the size and composition of your staff. The Appendix of this manual offers a number of critical attributes to consider when determining guidelines for your staff.

A few tips when putting together your staff.

1. Do your best to find people who understand the fundamentals.
2. Your assistants must care about the players.
3. It is essential you work with people you trust.
4. Look for people of high character and integrity.
5. Excellent coaches must be able to teach and effectively communicate.
6. Coaches must be willing to make a tremendous time commitment.
7. Realize the importance of having outstanding coaches at the freshman and JV levels.
8. All coaches must buy into your program and not just do their own thing.
9. Emphasize having fun, keeping players out, and building for the varsity.
10. Coaches must be positive role models.

The bottom line is that often you inherit a number of assistants from the previous coaching staff. If this is the case, it is essential that you establish clear and concise coaching guidelines that everyone agrees to follow.

Working with Your Staff

One of the many skills a new head coach has to practice and learn is working with and through assistant coaches. The following are suggestions that may help in regard to this special relationship:

- Ask your assistants for their counsel and help. Listen courteously to ideas from your staff. Give weight to the fact that people carry out their own ideas best. Show interest in and appreciation for their input. If you accept or reject their ideas, let them know why.
- Praise in public. Criticize constructively and in private. Be careful what you say and how you say it. Don't be upset by moderate complaining.
- Avoid domination. Delegate responsibility.
- Give your assistants goals, a sense of direction, something to strive for and to achieve.

- Keep your assistants informed concerning matters that affect them. Let people know where they stand. Be considerate and consistent.
- Show your assistants that you have confidence in them and that you expect them to do their best. Use every opportunity to build up in assistants a sense of the importance of their work and contributions.
- Make your ideas known through suggestions or requests. Be sure to tell the reasons for your requests.
- When you are wrong or make a mistake, admit it. Never forget that the leader sets the tone and style of the program.
- Let your assistants know about your plans even if they are in an early stage. Be sure to tell the reasons for your plans.

Recruiting Players

Most often, the best teams are dominated by seniors. Consequently, it is beneficial to have a good turnout at the younger grades and retain as many potential players as possible. Because of the time commitment necessary and distractions such as jobs and cars, it's common to lose a number of players after their freshman or sophomore year. Coaches must realize we are building for the future and some players mature later than others.

A fundamental motivational principle states that people do things for their reason and not yours. Keep in mind that people take action to either experience a gain or avoid a loss. In other words, "What's in it for me?"

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Life-long Values Developed Through Participation in Athletics

1. **Teamwork** - The ability to work with others is extremely important in today's world.
2. **Commitment** - Players must be at all practices and follow all team rules.
3. **Work Ethic** - Peak physical condition can only be attained through hard work.
4. **Pride in Performance** - A feeling of accomplishment is realized through positive application of effort.
5. **Friendships** - Lifetime relationships are developed through participation in sports.

6. **Achievement** - Players represent their communities, schools, and families. A feeling of togetherness is experienced.
7. **Enthusiasm** - In order to be successful, both sports and life must be approached with enthusiasm.
8. **Persistence** - One learns to get up and go again after being knocked down.
9. **Confidence** - Self-esteem is enhanced through a series of achievements.
10. **Athletic Ability** - Natural talent in athletics can be very valuable.
11. **Have Fun!** - Athletics should be fun to play and exciting to watch.
12. **Identity** - The team provides all participants with a sense of belonging.
13. **Courage** - Performance under pressure helps to conquer fear.
14. **Challenges** - Participants learn how to overcome obstacles to experience success.
15. **Better Grades** - Numerous studies indicate that students who are active in school activities perform better in the classroom.
16. **Responsibility** - Sports hold individuals accountable for their actions and help them realize the value of doing their job well.
17. **Success in Life** - According to the American College Testing Service, participation in H.S. Activities are the major indicator of success later in life.

It took me 17 years to get 3,000 hits in baseball.

I did it in one afternoon on the golf course.

- Hank Aaron

The School Environment

As a coach, you are very visible around school and in the community. Consequently, it is important to project a positive image and develop rapport with other school personnel. Even though you may teach five or six classes, the perception is that you are the coach. Unfortunately, some people have a negative attitude toward coaches and will stereotype you. While most of the school will be supportive, dealing with this element can be stressful. Since the staff and student body are expected to support your team, make it a point to back other school activities. By doing this, you are conveying the image of being a real team player and not just a self-centered coach.



All coaches are in the sales business. By viewing your players as customers, you see yourself as being responsible for selling your product. Some students are more enthusiastic about buying your product than others. The challenge is to utilize a number of strategies to attract the attention of all potential players. There is no doubt that the profession of coaching requires a complex set of talents and skills. These talents and skills must be diverse to reach a wide range of players. At various times you must be a counselor, a consultant, a friend, a problem solver, an expert, an artist, an explorer, a judge, a warrior, a speaker, a facilitator, and a persuader. Remember: "Attitudes are contagious. Make sure yours is worth catching!"

One Harvard Business School study determined that there are four factors critical to success in sales: information, intelligence, skill and attitude. When these factors were ranked as to importance, this particular study found that information, intelligence and skill combined amounted to 7% of the sales effectiveness. Attitude amounted to 93%. If 93% of success in sales

If 93% of success in sales can be attributed to attitude, it seems the same can be said about coaching.

can be attributed to attitude, it seems the same can be said about coaching. Always keep an upbeat attitude and be a positive force around your

school. Make it a point to wear a smile and offer a friendly greeting as you pass students and staff in the hallway. People appreciate it when you recognize them even though they may not show it. This is a challenge after a tough loss or during a losing season.

Educational experts remind us to reinforce the behavior we would like repeated. Often a young coach is a perfectionist and tends to focus on negative actions. After a loss, one might be inclined to have a video session and point out all the bad things. While it may be necessary to get personal at times and appeal to a team's pride, a coach must be careful to remain positive. Usually, appealing to the pride of a player and the team is more effective than being negative.

Effective Communication

When the word communication is used, many people think of speaking, but the true communicators know listening is extremely important. Have you ever known someone who is an excellent listener, someone you enjoy conversing with because he or she is an “active listener,” responding with thoughtful nods and verbal confirmations so you know what you’re saying is not only being heard, but also comprehended?

It is important for your players to understand what is expected of them in order to meet your expectations on and off the field. It is beneficial to make this known to the players and their parents at the orientation meeting prior to the start of the season.

“I have a simple coaching philosophy. We have discipline and structure. We don’t tolerate things like people being late. You have to recognize that you have to think of the team first.”
Mike McCarthy

Following is an example of a typical reminder card used by successful coaches. The card is titled **“Eleven Keys to Being a Champion.”** The players are told this is the formula for success and they are expected to follow it as closely as possible. As an everyday reminder, the 3” x 5” card is to be visible in a conspicuous place such as on the mirror in their room.

Using visuals, you can review the meaning of each statement and how the parents and players may assist in making the season the best possible experience for all. The eleven characteristics can also be professionally printed or painted in school colors and displayed in the locker room.

Your Team

Eleven Keys to Being a Champion

1. **PMA** – Always believe you will be successful.
2. **Preparation** – Practice with a purpose.
3. **Self-Discipline** – Follow all training rules.
4. **Commitment** – Make sacrifices for the team.
5. **Loyalty** – Always speak about teammates and coaches in a positive manner.
6. **Courage** – Stand up for what is right.
7. **Pride** – Be a “winner” on and off the field.
8. **Desire** – Possess the internal drive to do your best.
9. **Class** – Respect others as you strive for excellence.
10. **Persistence** – Be able to “bounce back” from adversity.
11. **Work** – Push yourself into peak condition.

Follow these rules and you will help make our TEAM NUMBER 1!

Consider making your own list and customize it for your school and philosophy. It is important for players and parents to realize what you stand for and the type of commitment you expect from them.

Positive Language

It is difficult to motivate someone using negative language. Always use language that expresses the desired result. While this may seem obvious, many coaches attempt to communicate by telling players what NOT to do, rather than what they WANT them to do.

Negative Language

- Don’t drop your head.
- Don’t fumble.
- Don’t pull your head away.
- Don’t get overextended.
- Don’t use drugs or alcohol

Positive Language

- Keep your head up.
- Hang on to the ball.
- See what you are going to hit.
- Don’t get overextended.
- Keep your feet under you.
- Make good choices, stay away from drugs and alcohol.



Coaching/Teaching for Success

Positive language makes a tremendous difference, especially when the same terminology is used in practice as in the game. For example, during a game when there is a time out say, “Here is what we are going to do” in a positive, affirmative manner, and often that the outcome will be the result. Whether you are in the classroom, the strength and conditioning room, or on the field/court, always express an idea in language that presents a mental picture of the desired outcome. Explain to student/athletes what they **should** be doing, not what they shouldn’t be doing. It doesn’t make sense to introduce or reinforce negative actions. Be positive when you communicate with your players. It’s not enough to just use affirmative language. All coaches must make it a point to encourage their players to express themselves in a proactive way. Often when faced with a challenge, young athletes will respond by saying, “I can’t do this.” That is a teachable moment. Explain to the player “I can’t” means, “I

cannot do this - **ever**.” Correct them to say, “I’m having difficulty,” and that means with dedicated practice they can work their way through the drill or task.

“Try” is another weak word. Don’t allow players or coaches to use it. Too often when we “try” something, we are already convinced we won’t be able to accomplish it. People are not interested in what you are going to try to do. They are more concerned about what you will do. Encouraging a student to do his or her best is much more positive than instructing them “to try.”

Eliminate These Phrases

- I can’t
- If
- I’ll try
- I don’t have the time
- I’m afraid of

Use These Phrases

- I can
- I will
- I will do my best
- I will find the time
- I’m confident



Be a Positive Role Model

Your actions are your most important tools of communication. Teach who you are first, then what you know. The old saying “Practice what you preach” certainly applies. We are constantly giving players messages through our actions. These actions must be consistent with our expectations of the athletes. Nothing communicates more eloquently who you are than what you do. When you show interest in what a player is saying you are affirming that you care about that person as an individual and you demonstrate to them that they are more than just a number on the team.

*Nothing communicates more eloquently
who you are than what you do.*

Communicating With Parents

At all grade levels, it is important to know about the player’s family and environment. Often young people who experience difficulty conforming to team rules also have adjustment problems at home and in the classroom. An information card or database filled out during the spring or summer will provide you with basic facts about the player. During the summer, take a drive around the district to become acquainted with where players live. Athletes are impressed

when the coach can relate what part of the district they come from. In addition, having all the addresses, phone numbers and email addresses on the information card, saves time when you need to contact parents.

Disagreements

Effectively communicating with players, coaches, parents, teachers and administrators takes time and skill. Most problems can be resolved or limited in scope through finding a way to work things out in a manner acceptable to both parties. How you react and the type of language you use will play a huge role in either creating understanding or building a wall of permanent disagreement and inability to compromise. Instead of saying, “You’re wrong or I disagree” consider:

- That’s one perspective; I see it a little differently....
- That may be, but what makes sense to me....
- I think I understand what you are saying; can you elaborate on that for me?
- It looks like we are in agreement on a couple things, but....

***Comments such as these give credit to the other person’s point of view and are less likely to be offensive.**

Show Appreciation and Give Credit to Others

One of the best ways to influence others is to show appreciation for their cooperation or assistance. Periodically, when everyone on the team is focused and practice is going great, make it a point to tell the team. A brief, positive comment will pay many dividends. A fundamental axiom of effective teaching/coaching is to reinforce the behavior you want repeated. We all learned this, but it’s easy to get immersed in the X’s and O’s and neglect the essential motivational devices. Also, anytime you are recognized for achievement, be sure to give credit to others who assisted you in accomplishing the task. Just as an uncooperative group of students can be a real challenge; a cooperative class or team can rise to levels beyond the expectations of others.



Remember the three C’s of effective communication. The first C refers to **clearly** speaking to the subject. Attempting to communicate with someone who speaks around an issue but doesn’t get to the point can be very frustrating. The second C is related to the first. Why would one use complicated terminology when common more **concise** words would get the job done? Speak to communicate and not to impress.

The third C conveys a feeling of **consideration** for the welfare of the speaker. We've all heard the statement, "Students don't **care** how much you know until they know how much you care." When you really care about someone, you are cautious to communicate in a manner that preserves his or her dignity and demonstrates respect for the person's views.

Research indicates that up to 85% of communication is non-verbal. Make sure your body language and the tone of your voice are consistent with the meaning of what you are saying. Too often many of us are so busy trying to get people to understand us that we spend very little time trying to understand them. Always take time to listen to others and demonstrate interest in their views.

Research indicates up to 85% of communication is non-verbal.

Consciously work on improving your communication skills. Volunteer to speak at a faculty meeting, share your program with community organizations, and actually look for opportunities to speak in front of a group.

Practice Planning

Keep these tips in mind when organizing your practices.

1. **Written Practice Schedule** – Always have a written practice schedule and distribute it to your assistants a day in advance. Some experienced coaches have all the practice schedules planned and written out prior to the first game.
2. **Weekly Practice Schedule** – Once the season starts there are advantages to having a set schedule for every day of the week. Make room for minor revisions.
3. **Keep Practice Moving** – Players learn by doing. Limit explanations and encourage activity. Much can be accomplished in two hours when you are organized.
4. **Short, Dynamic Drills are Best** – Research indicates that three eight-minute sessions are much better than one twenty-five minute session.
5. **Stay Active** – Organize your practices so as many players as possible are actively engaged in practice.
6. **Design Drills to Teach Fundamentals** – All drills must have carry over value to teach and refine fundamentals essential to game day success.
7. **Use a Checklist** – Determine what must be accomplished before the first game and design your practice schedules to accomplish your goals.
8. **Word of the Day** - Have players pick a word of the day at the end of practice. This will be one of the areas of major emphasis for the next day's practice.
9. **Seldom Practice Pre-Game Drills** - Don't waste time with a complicated pre-game warm-up. Stretch out and loosen up but don't wear the team down with a great deal of running and chanting. Never worry about winning the pre-game.
10. **P.M.A.** - Always promote a positive mental attitude. There is no place for negative thinking or lack of confidence in athletics or in life. Encourage an **"I Believe"** attitude.

Teamwork Makes the Dream Work!

Attempt to separate any tradition or past experience from an opponent who normally is really tough. Do not accept "I'll try" as an answer -- "Do It!"

11. **Assistant Coaches** - Make good use of the assistant coaches. Take advantage of their strengths and be able to delegate responsibility. Avoid unnecessary meetings and long video sessions. Keep in mind their family life and lack of substantial pay. Be sure to give them credit and a pat on the back occasionally.
12. **Work Vs. Time** - Be sure to realize the difference between work (activity directed to some purpose or end) and putting in time but not accomplishing anything constructive. Grading video can sometimes fall in this category.
13. **Team Togetherness** - Consider getting the team together once a week at a player's house for a meal. The coach can kick this off by hosting the first outing.
14. **Unique Event** - Each season, plan at least one unique event to help fire up the school and community.
15. **Shirts and Hats, etc.** - Many of us help promote school caps, bumper stickers, shirts, trunks and other methods to put a sport on display.
16. **"Air it Out" Session** - Periodically at practice, schedule a session where anyone can speak up and bring an issue before the group. The team will decide whether it is a legitimate concern.
17. **Support School Activities** - The coach should back all school activities. Make it a point to attend plays, band concerts, sporting events and as many extracurricular activities as possible.
18. **Team Improvement** - The key to improving the quality of the team is to take the below average and average players and move them up to average and above average. The exceptional players will always be good and don't have the improvement potential of the poorer players.
19. **Give Credit to the Opponent** - We can help one another after a tough game by giving credit to the opposing team and the coach. Too often a quick comment after the game comes out sounding wrong in the paper the next day.
20. **Bench Conduct** - Be sure to go over proper bench behavior before the first game. Explain what a player should do when you call their name and how they should go about entering the game.
21. **Night Off** - Later in the season consider giving the team a night off practice. Use the time to go over video or lift weights. This break in routine will often help pep up future practices. This can be a good move after a really tough loss.
22. **Stay Loose On Game Day** - If the coach is uptight, the players are more likely to play tight, as well. Attempt to keep every game of equal importance to avoid up and down play.
23. **Recognize the Individual At Practice** - When a player makes an outstanding play in practice, give them immediate recognition through a big clap or some other method.
24. **Keep Drills Short** - Most learning takes place early in the drill. Encourage players to do it right rather than just doing it. Select drills that have actual carryover value to the game situation.

How to get Players to Play as a Team

Getting your players to play as a team is critical to your success. It starts with the coaching staff working together in the off-season, summer, and pre-season. When the players see the coaches working together they are more likely to work together as a team themselves. From day one in practice, emphasize the fact that the team is more important than any individual. Your players must know that individual awards are due in large part to team accomplishments rather than individual stats.



Be careful about giving any individual large amounts of praise either in practice or with the media. When radio stations, newspapers, and television folks want to talk to your players, the coaches should decide who speaks and then make sure you spread it around until all seniors and returning starters have had an opportunity to speak. Your athletes should be conditioned to talk about team chemistry, team attitude, and teamwork when speaking with the media. This is more difficult than you may think, because the media people

have their own ideas about whom they wish to speak to and it is usually the same two or three players.

Have different players lead your stretch and flex lines in practice each day. Give each senior and each starter an opportunity to speak to the team. Some of these talks can take place after practice, others before games and some at halftime of games or after games.

Personal Goal Setting

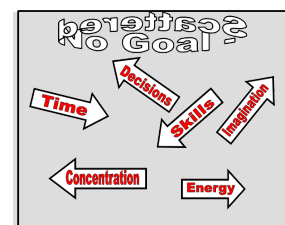
As a head coach you will have many demands on your time. It is important to manage the time that you do have and establish a list of priorities. In addition to coaching, you have your full-time job, family time, etc. Just as we establish goals in our coaching life, we should also have goals in our personal life. This will help provide a sense of direction and help us manage our time.

Your athletes should be conditioned to talk about team chemistry, team attitude, and teamwork when speaking with the media.

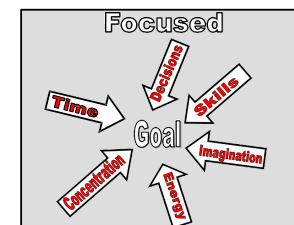
Goals Help Us Focus

When people don't have concrete goals to work toward, all their energy, imagination, time, skills, decision-making ability, and concentration just fly around without purpose. Goals help us focus on the mission and accomplish tasks through providing direction and rationale.

No Goals - Lack of Direction



Goals Give Us Direction



A person should establish short-range, intermediate and long-range goals. Short-range goals include the things you wish to accomplish today, tomorrow or within several weeks. These provide direction to our daily lives and give us targets to aim for in the future. Intermediate goals refer to the challenges several months or possibly even years in the future. It is difficult to accomplish immediate goals without laying a foundation of short-range goals. Short-range goals give us a sense of accomplishment, provide encouragement, and help build confidence. Long-range goals are more like dreams. They may represent a desired state five or even ten years in the future.

Ideally, a person should set goals in six areas of life. These include:

- **Family and Home** – Find the time for your spouse and children. Schedule them into your busy life and make it a point to do the little things that send the message to your loved ones that you care about them. Your presence is more important than your presents.
- **Spiritual and Ethical** – Regardless of your religious affiliation, live in a state of mind where you are at peace with yourself. One of the best ways to guarantee this is to treat others as you would like them to treat you and to possess a high degree of integrity.
- **Mental and Educational** – Experience intellectual growth in order to keep your mind sharp. Set a minimum of 30 minutes aside daily for professional reading in your field. This doesn't sound like much, but in one year it adds up to 24 eight-hour days.
- **Physical and Health** – If you don't take care of your body, where will you live? Too often we can get wound up in our work and play and forget about keeping in reasonably sound condition. Schedule a yearly physical and establish a maximum bodyweight and follow a plan to stay within the proper range for your height and body type.
- **Financial and Career** – Keep your profession in proper perspective. Peak-performers are not workaholics. Find the time to schedule in free time so your job doesn't dictate your

life. It is best to pursue a profession you enjoy, so your work actually becomes part of your play.

- **Social and Cultural** – Enjoy time with your friends, appreciate nature, and take advantage of a variety of entertainment opportunities. Take pleasure in reading, value art, and treasure music.

Keep Your Wheel Round

To visualize the proper development of each area in your life, think of them as spokes on a wheel. In order to guarantee a smooth ride the spokes must be of the same length. If any one area is neglected or receives too much attention, the ride through life becomes quite bumpy. Develop a plan to keep the wheel as round as possible.

Goals help kindle our fire of desire, and provide the foundation for motivation.

By establishing goals in these six categories of our lives, we give more meaning to our daily actions. Our life has more purpose. The goal serves as a magnet pulling us in the direction of our dreams. Goals help kindle our fire of desire, and provide the foundation for motivation. To be effectively motivated, a person must have a reason for doing things.



A carefully thought out, well-designed goal crystallizes our thinking and helps keep us on target. Another benefit of goal setting is that it helps you make better use of your time. Many coaches feel overwhelmed with balancing schoolwork, coaching, and responsibilities at home. By making a list and prioritizing the tasks, you become better organized and waste less time. Periodically reflect on your wheel and make sure it is as close to round as possible. When we have significant,

important, valuable goals to accomplish, we find more energy and become more creative. Instead of reacting to what happens to you, be proactive and cause good things to happen through advanced planning.

Team Goals

Level 4 coaches believe in the value of establishing team performance goals and stressing them as the season progresses. Remember when you take care of the little things, the big things happen. Too often teams set win and loss goals and they usually set them very

high. For example: "We will go undefeated and win the state championship." While it is great to be optimistic, what happens after the first loss or the second?

A few reminders when designing a goal setting plan.

- Set behaviorally measurable goals. To be effective, goals must be accepted by the athlete. Specific goals direct activity more effectively and reliably than vague or general goals.
- Set difficult, yet realistic goals. Challenging goals produce better performance than moderate or easy goals; however, they must be attainable.
- Set short range, as well as long range goals. Short range goals are an essential means of attaining long range goals.
- Set practice, as well as competition goals. This forces the athlete to focus attention on relevant activities and promotes the development of new strategies.
- Set performance goals rather than outcome goals. This has the effect of regulating expenditure of effort and enhances persistence.
- Identify goal achievement strategies and target dates for goal achievement. Record goals, once they have been identified and achieved.
- Goal setting only works if there is timely feedback showing progress in relation to the goal. Goal attainment is enhanced by a written plan of action or strategy.

Common problems that arise when goal setting:

- Setting too many goals too soon.
- Setting goals that are too general.
- Failing to modify unrealistic goals.
- Failing to set performance goals.
- Not understanding the time and commitment needed to implement a goal setting program.

Personal and Team Motivation

Motivation is actually two words, motive and action. It is our motive for action, our reason for doing things. We have a positive attitude because we are motivated to see the glass half full instead of half empty. Positive attitude and positive motivation always go together. It is impossible to be effectively motivated without belief in a positive result. When the coach is motivated, the player becomes motivated.

Most definitions of motivation include some variation of what Success Motivation Institute says, motivation is, “A desire held in expectation with the belief that it will be realized.” Picking the definition apart we see “desire” is a vital ingredient. No one can give us desire; it must spring from within. We must have an innate desire to coach; it is a gift. “Belief” is much different; it can be developed. Belief in yourself as a coach is directly related to the principles of effective leadership.



The key to being effectively motivated is to focus on the objectives for the day. Realize you are an influential person in the life of every player. When you made the decision to become a coach, your motivation probably was to make a positive difference in the lives of others. Always keep that in mind. You are a difference maker every day! That in itself should be your “Motive for Action.”

Coaching Psychology

Keep in mind that coaching is teaching and teaching is coaching. The only thing that changes is the location. Developing teamwork is essential in the academic classroom, on the stage, the athletic field, gym, or wherever education takes place. Many coaches have found the application of these motivational principles has led to success in the classroom and in coaching. What is success? The following definition is widely accepted. “The progressive realization of worthwhile, predetermined, personal and team goals.”

Stay away from the thinking that it is impossible to motivate another person and that all individuals are responsible for their own motivation. This is an excuse; it is a way of saying the coach is not responsible for motivating the team. The effective coach can and does utilize motivational principles to bring out the best in his/her players and team. Consider these fundamental motivational principles:

The effective coach can and does utilize motivational principles to bring out the best from his players and team.

Motivational Principles

1. **Motivation can be learned or developed. A person doesn't have to be born with it.** When provided with a goal or mission in life, one is more apt to take action. This is why it's important to speak with players about their individual and team goals.
Coaching application: Coaches have an obligation to assist players in establishing team and personal goals.
2. **To be effectively motivated, a person must possess a desire to act, have high self-esteem, and a positive mental attitude.** Effective motivation is extremely difficult without belief or self-confidence. Once again, this concept points out the value of teaching the player first, then sport.
Coaching application: Coaches must provide a variety of experiences that will give players many opportunities to realize success. Perhaps playing a new position or a different approach by the coach will help.
3. **Belief in one's job and in one's purpose is the essence of motivation.** When a person believes his or her daily work is valued, he or she is more likely to do more than is required. This is true of students and teachers.
Coaching application: Coaches must make sure everyone on the team is recognized and appreciated and not just the best players.
4. **What a person really needs in life is not a stress-free state, but the striving and struggling to accomplish a goal that provides a feeling of accomplishment.** The only people who are absolutely tension free are in the grave. A certain amount of stress means a person is concerned about doing the best job possible.

Coaching Application: Coaches are compelled to help players develop a procedure to deal with setbacks and disappointments.

5. **A person should not attempt to motivate another with the reverse of an idea.**
Example: “Don’t do drugs. They mess up your mind.” People tend to act on their dominant thoughts. By telling someone what not to do, you actually introduce that thought into his or her mind. This topic is addressed in more detail earlier in this manual.

Coaching Application: Always speak with the expected result in mind. Explain to players what you expect them to do and how they may act to reach the desired result.

6. **We become what we think about the most.** The human brain is like a heat-seeking missile. When a person concentrates on success and possesses mental images of achievement, he or she is more likely to be successful.

Coaching Application: Help players understand how to use the powerful tool of visualization. Convince them to believe “The body can achieve what the mind can perceive.”



7. **To the degree you provide others with what they need, they will give back to you what you need.** The more you do for others, the more others will do for you. Some people have difficulty with this concept; however, when you really believe in doing things for others because you feel good about doing them, many rewards will come back to you. Of course, most people don’t keep track of what they are doing for others, or even expect something in return. It’s just a beneficial attitude to carry through life.

Coaching Application: See yourself as a leader who is in the business of helping others experience peak performance. Your motivation comes from the intrinsic rewards you reap as your players achieve.

8. **When you fear a possible outcome, you actually set it up as your subconscious goal.** Since we are moved by our dominant thoughts, fearing an outcome or event and concentrating on that thought actually moves one toward that end.
Coaching application: Assist players in using positive, affirmative thoughts and language. Instead of saying, “I really get nervous when I have to perform in front of an audience,” convince them to think, “This is a great opportunity for me to show what I can do.”

9. **People do things for their reasons, not your reasons. Those reasons are usually emotional and determined by the way a person feels.** Keeping this in mind, it is best to remember when attempting to influence a person a teacher/coach should approach the individual by indicating how he/she will benefit from the experience.

Coaching Application: When attempting to recruit a student for a team too often coaches will explain to the individual how much the student will be able to help the team. Most often the potential recruit will respond better when it is clearly explained how he/she will benefit from team participation.

10. **It can be difficult to motivate others.** However, you can arouse and stimulate those inclinations within others that steer their thoughts and actions. This gets back to the issue of motivating others. Once again, you may not be able to motivate another person, but you can help establish the conditions that enable people to motivate themselves.

Coaching Application: Always remember, “Attitudes are contagious.” Teach who you are first and then what you know.

Building Belief and Self-Confidence

The Law of Attraction

Maintaining a positive mental attitude is the key to enjoying life. Program your subconscious mind to expect success and the “Law of Attraction” will do the rest. The “Law of Attraction” simply states, “You become that which you think about the most.” Your attitude works like a huge magnet that attracts positive people and events. If you want to be an outstanding teacher/coach, see yourself as an outstanding teacher/coach.



How to Develop and Maintain a Positive Mental Attitude

1. **Be enthusiastic!** Move vigorously; use expressive gestures when talking. Maintain eye contact. Walk with a confident stride.
2. **Speak in a loud, clear voice.** Always use affirmative statements. Work the phrases “I can” and “I will” into conversations.
3. **Professional pride.** Outstanding teachers/coaches view themselves as professionals. When you feel pride in your profession, you strive to live up to your positive expectation.
4. **Invest in yourself.** Find the time to take classes, attend workshops, clinics, conferences and seminars. Continue to grow as a professional and you’ll feel better about yourself.
5. **Be an active listener.** Make it a point to focus on the person who is speaking and use eye contact, body language and brief comments to affirm you are listening.

Demonstrate interest in the ideas and actions of others.

6. **Wear a smile.** People often form their first opinion of others by their facial expression. A warm friendly smile and personal greeting can be contagious. We cannot control our age, but we can control our expression.
7. **Set goals.** Goals give us direction by helping to organize our lives and reduce stress. Having a daily, weekly, and monthly plan helps put meaning in our lessons and lives. *“Plan your work, work your plan.”*
8. **Be polite.** Say “please,” “thank you” and “you’re welcome.” Compliment your students and players on their good points. When you treat them with respect, they will treat you with respect.
9. **Have a plan to deal with criticism.** Students, parents, educators, and other coaches may criticize your actions. Be prepared for this, and develop a plan to follow when criticized.
10. **Positive persistence.** Some players have difficulty bouncing back from adversity. Help them understand that failure is never fatal just as success is never final. Encourage them to look forward to the next challenge.
11. **Always maintain your composure and self-control.** Remember, you are a professional! You have been trained to solve problems. Players may act out and make cruel statements; the best way to diffuse a volatile situation is to remain calm.
12. **Exercise your mind and body on a daily basis.** Be a life-long learner. Set a time aside for personal growth. Even thirty minutes daily of professional reading will help you remain innovative. Physical exercise will invigorate the body and refresh the mind.
13. **Remember the “Golden Rule.”** This means more than doing unto others as you would have them do unto you; it means refraining from doing unto others that which you would *not* like them to do to you.
14. **Learn from failure.** Perhaps this is the most important. Teaching/coaching is one profession where failure is a daily reality. You must develop the courage and persistence to learn from your disappointments and view failure as a stepping-stone to future success. Your players will notice how you handle a loss. Teach them to give credit to the other team, but remind them to learn from defeat as well as victory.

Experts remind us to reinforce the behavior we would like repeated. As perfectionists, many young coaches tend to focus too much on negative actions. After a loss, it is common to have a film session and point out how bad the team played and even criticize individuals as the video clip is repeated. While it may be necessary to get personal at times and appeal to a team’s pride, a coach must be careful to remain positive and point out the good things, even in a loss.

Perhaps a better approach after a bad loss is for the coaches to tell the team, “We are better than the way we played. The game is over so we are concentrating on the next opponent.”

Remember life’s greatest secret: *“You become that which you think about the most.”* In order to keep a positive attitude, you must continually engage in positive self-talk. Daily affirmation of your self- worth and acceptance of your uniqueness is necessary in order to expect the best from others. A positive attitude is one of the most important characteristics to guarantee your effectiveness as a coach. With a PMA you will enjoy life more and help others get the most out of theirs. Attitudes are contagious. Make yours worth catching.

Sportsmanship and Life-Long Lessons

As a coach you are constantly sending messages to others through your comments and actions. Always think of the consequences before you speak or act. Do your best to refrain from speaking or taking action when you are emotionally upset. This is why it is best to not say much to your team immediately after the game. Sleep on those thoughts, analyze them, and address the team at your next meeting.



Sportsmanship may be defined as, “The conduct of one participating in a sport. This includes fairness, respect for your teammates, coaches, officials, opponents, and yourself, and graciousness on winning or losing.” By analyzing the definition, one can readily see the behavior of the head coach is a major factor in determining the sportsmanship climate in the school. These factors carry over to everyday life and become life-long values.

How the coach can influence players, fans, parents, and school personnel in promoting sportsmanship.

1. **Be a positive role model for others.** Follow all rules and treat opponents, coaches, officials, and yourself with respect.
2. **Remember the golden rule.** Treat others the way you like to be treated.
3. **List positive expectations** for fans in the game program. Publicize these in the local newspaper and school newsletter.
4. **Use the P. A. system to remind spectators of positive expectations** before and during

the course of the contest.

5. **Athletes in one sport can show their support for participants in other sports.** For example: Members of the football team can cheer on the cross-country runners.
6. **Display messages advocating good sportsmanship** in school and the gymnasium and playing fields.
7. **Schools and conferences can develop programs** to recognize individuals and schools for practicing good sportsmanship.
8. **Game officials may be encouraged by the conference and WHSAA to provide positive feedback** to schools when teams demonstrate admirable sportsmanship.
9. **Coaches should hold pre-season meetings with players and parents** to explain positive expectations during the season and at games.
10. **School assemblies and/or classroom meetings** that explain proper behavior and sportsmanship during school events, ensure that all students receive the same constructive message.
11. **Follow the guidelines provided by the WHSAA** to encourage appropriate conduct on and off the field.
12. **The activities director must meet with the coaching staff** to guarantee that all coaches deliver the same affirmative message to their team.
13. **It is imperative that school personnel who are properly identified by distinctive apparel properly supervise every school event.**
14. **Coaches are obligated to model and teach** acceptable pre and post-game behavior in addition to conduct during the contest.
15. **Place a premium on performing to the best of your ability.** Take pride in teamwork, listening to the coach, and accepting the official's decisions without complaint.
16. **Acknowledge victories without humiliating opponents.** Inappropriate cheers and chants, running sprints, singing the school song in front of the opponent, etc. can be demeaning to the other team.
17. **Have logical consequences.** Be proactive to prevent problems from developing, but have a carefully thought out plan in place to invoke when poor sportsmanship is displayed.

Dealing with Stress and Setbacks

Coaching can lead to more stress in your life. As a rule coaches tend to put pressure on themselves in addition to influences from outside forces such as parents, overzealous fans, the media, etc. Attempt to adjust the sources of stress in your life by avoiding or altering them. Remember the four A's: **Avoid**, **Alter**, **Accept** and **Adapt**.

Avoid some of the stressors of coaching by applying a number of the following:

- **Take control of your surroundings.** Organize the coaching office and locker room so you know where to find things.
- **Avoid people who bother you.** If you have a co-worker, parent or fan who causes your jaw to tense, make it a point to avoid him or her.
- **Learn to say no.** You have a lot of responsibilities and demands on your time. At a certain point, you cross the line between being charitable and being foolish. You can meet with youth coaches and help them, but delegate the organization and coaching to someone else.
- **Ditch part of your list.** Label your to-do list with A's, B's and C's, according to importance. If it's a hectic day, scratch the C's from your list. Remember: A certain amount of avoidance is healthy, but some problems can't be overlooked.

Alter some of the stressors of coaching by applying a number of the following.

- **Take Inventory.** One of the most helpful things you can do during times of stress is to analyze your strengths and weaknesses, then work to change your situation for the better.
- **Ask others to change their behavior.** If you have an assistant coach who isn't getting the job done, speak with him/her and explain what must be changed. This is difficult to do, but must be done. Small problems often create larger ones if they aren't resolved.
- **Communicate your feelings openly.** Remember to use "I" statements and refer to the team. "I feel you and the team are getting the wrong message when you are late for practice. Is there something we can do to solve the problem?"
- **Manage your time better.** Organize your day so that tasks are lumped together — group your phone calls, errands and computer-related tasks. The reward of increased efficiency will be extra time.
- **State limits in advance.** Be proactive. Instead of stewing over a colleague's non stop chatter, politely start the conversation with, "I've got only five minutes to cover this."
- **Maintain a sense of humor.** No matter how frustrating the situation may appear, keep it in perspective and appreciate the humor of the event. Laughter enhances your intake of oxygen-rich air, stimulates your heart, lungs and muscles, and increases the

endorphins that are released by your brain. Laughter can also stimulate circulation and aid muscle relaxation, both of which help reduce some of the physical symptoms of stress.

Increasing your ability to cope

For those cases in which the source of your stress can't be avoided or altered, work to adjust your ability to accept it.

Accept some of the stressors of coaching by applying a number of the following.

Sometimes we have no choice but to accept things the way they are. For those times consider this action:

- **Talk with someone.** You may not be able to change a frustrating situation, but that doesn't mean your feelings aren't legitimate. Schedule a conference with someone who you respect and explain your frustration. You will feel better after talking it out.
- **Forgive.** It takes negative energy to be angry. By carrying a grudge you consume yourself with fear, worry, doubt, and anger. These sap our energy. Forgiving may be difficult, but by doing so, you will free yourself from burning more negative energy. Why stew in your anger when you could shrug it off and move on?
- **Practice positive self-talk.** It's easy to lose objectivity when you're stressed. One negative thought can lead to another, and soon you've created a mental avalanche. Be positive. Instead of thinking, "I am making decisions in critical situations," try this: "I made a mistake on that call, but I'm going to learn from it."

Take Charge of Your Life

The perception that you can't cope is actually one of the greatest stressors. That's why adapting — which often involves changing your standards or expectations — can be most helpful in dealing with stress. Too often we may start the year thinking the team will be in contention for a championship. Perhaps injuries and bad breaks cause a few close losses. This requires reassessment of the season and redefining goals.



- **Expect change.** Be prepared to redefine success and perfection, and you may operate with a little less guilt and frustration. Some things that happen in which you have no control. Research says 40% of the actions we worry about we can't control, another 40% won't happen and that leaves only 20%, so keep situations in proper perspective.
- **Practice positive thinking.** Stop negative thoughts immediately. Refuse to continually review a bad play, focus on how to do it correctly.

- **Reframe the issue.** Try looking at your situation from a new reference point. Instead of feeling sorry for yourself, develop a plan to remedy the situation. There is no place for self-pity in successful programs.
- **Adopt a personal slogan.** Create a saying such as, "*Attitudes are contagious, mine must be worth catching*" and mentally repeat it in tough situations.
- **Create an assets column.** Imagine all the things that bring you joy in life — vacation, children, pets. Call on that list when you're stressed. It will help to put things into perspective and serve as a reminder of life's joys.
- **Look at the big picture.** Ask yourself, "Will this matter in a year? In five years?" The answer is often no. Realizing this makes a stressful situation seem less overwhelming.
- **Exercise your body and mind.** Physical activity helps soothe our stress. Find the time to schedule it into your busy life. Reading a good book and mental stimulation can also be relaxing.
- **Invest in yourself.** Many valuable books have been written and a wealth of information is available regarding stress reduction.

Choosing the right technique

Stressors, good and bad, are part of every life. Practice applying these techniques to balance your stress equation. Remember, some stress is good. It causes us to act and transcend our previous levels of accomplishment. The only people who are completely stress free are in the cemetery. The key is to keep your stress under control. You must manage it. It must not manage you.



Working with the Media

Most coaches like to see their team covered by sports media on television, the radio, and newspaper. We can help promote our sport by cooperating with media personnel. You can prepare for requests for information about your team by putting together a preseason outlook that can be distributed to all media sources. It is best to wait until the start of practice to prepare the guide, since you want it as accurate as possible. Many coaches have found it advisable to have a "Picture day" when players are dressed in game uniforms and the media, parents and other interested parties are invited to take pictures.

Choose your remarks carefully after the game.

It is prudent to speak with your players prior to any interviews to encourage them to make positive, team-oriented remarks. Coaches, too, are advised to be cautious with their remarks at the beginning of the season. While most of us like to be optimistic, we must also be realistic and realize that if we predict a championship, it does put a lot of pressure on the team. It's better to take the games one at a time and concentrate on the first opponent. This is a good time to recognize the seniors for their commitment to the program.



Choose your remarks carefully after the game. A comment like, "We really stunk up the place" will not sound very good in the morning paper. After a big loss or a close defeat, give credit to your opponent and refrain from saying much about your team. Reserve your comments for the following day when you are less emotional. Berating the team is counterproductive to the team and everyone else when frustrated after a loss.

Successful Coaching

All coaches strive to build a successful program. When you have built team motivation to the point where you expect success it is important to stay hungry and do what is necessary to maintain success. This is difficult to do

The key is to build a sound foundation at the youth level where many students have the opportunity to play and develop the skills, great work ethics, and positive expectations.

in that some classes have more gifted athletes than others. The key is to build a sound foundation at the youth level where many students have the opportunity to play and develop the skills, great work ethics, and positive

expectations. The coaching staff must continue to work hard and smart and not rest on past accomplishments.

When the team is successful it is important to give credit to the assistant coach's players, booster club, parents, administrators, school staff, and all associated with the program. It is best to deflect attention and credit away from the head coach. Be sure to maintain high ethical standards and be a positive role model. Be cautious about the pitfalls of success.

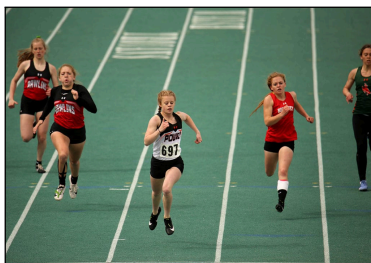
1. Thinking that if you keep doing the same things the result will be the same. All top coaches know that you must continue to grow and be willing to adjust to the times.
2. Getting an over inflated view of your own importance and making unreasonable demands.
3. Belief that you are undeserving of all the good things and recognition that come your way as a result of your accomplishments and successes.
4. Fear of success is the fear of accomplishment and being recognized and honored.
5. Lack of belief in your own ability to sustain your progress, and the accomplishments of the team. Self-doubt is common
6. Belief that no matter how much you are able to achieve or accomplish, it will never be enough to sustain success.
7. Belief that success is an end in itself; yet that end is not enough to sustain your interest and/or commitment.
8. Fear that once you have achieved the goals you have worked diligently for, the motivation to continue will fade.



The most important thing to remember is to be the same person you were prior to your state championship. Many coaches will attest that coaching is like life; it is a journey not a destination. Enjoy interacting with your team and aiding the players to become the best they can be.

Keys to Successful Coaching

1. We will always use the positive approach in our coaching.
2. Coaches must work together as a team. Support each other on the field, difference of opinion should be limited to coaching meetings.
3. Be organized and coach on the move. Accomplish as much as possible in practice. Run to drills, have continuous energy.
4. Coach with enthusiasm! It is contagious.
5. Be involved with your players as people, not just athletes.
6. Suggestions on personnel, strategy, etc. are encouraged.
7. Always emphasize proper fundamentals. Pay attention to detail.
8. Be a good drill coach.
 - All drills must have a purpose.
 - The drill should simulate game conditions.
 - Organize drills so that you optimize player involvement and limit players watching.
 - Explain the "Why?" of drills.
 - Give positive feedback for good performance.
 - Always keep in mind safety concerns.
9. If you have to discipline a player in practice, be sure to visit with them before they leave the locker room.
10. Be open to all players, as the amount of growth for each player every year will be different.
11. Be consistent in your coaching. Some days you will have to push yourself.
12. Make an extra effort to motivate the players who are not starters.
13. If you notice a player who is not performing up to ability, find out why.
14. Report all injuries to the head coach.
15. Be proud to be a coach and realize the tremendous responsibility that goes with the position.
16. Keep a close eye on your players during hot weather. Additional fluid is a must.
17. Have fun coaching. Be a positive role model, be aware that all eyes are on you 24/7/365.
18. We will emphasize all aspects of the team.
19. Always be on time for practice, drills, and meetings. Be a positive example for the players.



Coaching Everybody

One of the challenges for any coach today is to find ways to teach every athlete while, at the same time, respecting their individual differences. Treating each player with the respect they deserve will not only lead to improved individual and team performance, but it will also lessen the chance of a coach being criticized or even terminated for failing to do so.

With that in mind, here are some ideas about coaching all student-athletes.

Cultural Differences

All of us view the world around us largely as we were raised and taught. Our family's customs, religion, socio-economic and political factors made us who we are today. The result is a diverse population of student athletes and coaches. While diversity is regarded as an advantage, it can result in racism, ethnic discrimination, religious intolerance, sexism, homophobia and social class prejudice. While Wyoming is less diverse than some other states, that is rapidly changing. As a result, these various prejudices are more apt to be encountered in players and even coaches.



Coaches must guard against stereotyping in their work. Stereotyping can result in expectations that are inaccurate and even debilitating for student athletes. If we think someone will be better or worse than they are because of how we view them culturally, we are placing both the student athlete and ourselves at risk. We must always be vigilant in guarding against communicating expectations based on our view of student athletes' cultural background.

Coaching Recommendations:

- Be sensitive to the cultural differences and respect those differences as strengths, not weaknesses.
- Be sure your players are able to respect their own culture within your program.
- Develop a clear understanding of your own background and how it may influence your coaching. Be sure you are not imposing your cultural background on that of your players.
- If discipline is required be sure to treat all players fairly and according to school policy. No one should receive a harsher punishment or a "pass" because of their background or

community standing.

- Don't allow any racist, sexist, or culturally biased language in your players' communication. Allowing such shows approval on your part.
- Encourage all parents and families to participate in team activities. A better understanding and appreciation of each other will be seen.

Gender Differences

For decades nearly all high school sports were offered for men only. It wasn't until 1972 that Title IX made female participation in sport a reality. This was true in Wyoming with very few sports for girls until the early 70's. Today's sport offerings show the positive impact Title IX has had on Wyoming high school sports.

Our sports offerings of today show many popular sports for men, women and mixed groups. The coaching ranks show similar diversity with many female coaches producing quality teams while coaching both genders. Still, some areas of gender bias exist.

Forty years of gender research has shown that male and female athletes are more similar than different. We, as coaches, must be careful in our communication to never identify one gender as inferior, or less deserving, than another.

Homosexuality and Sexual Orientation

There have been many changes in this area in the past few years. Some professional and college athletes have been acknowledging their homosexuality. Coaching at the secondary level certainly will put a coach in contact with homosexual athletes during their careers. Some coaches may have strong opinions on either side of this issue, but a coach has a professional obligation to set aside any personal opinions and provide a supportive environment to all athletes they are coaching.

Coaching Recommendations:

- Be sensitive to stereotyping that may lead you to make invalid assumptions that men and women should be coached differently because of their gender.
- Regardless of gender, get to know players as unique individuals and treat them with respect.
- Establish and enforce policies aimed at preventing anti-gay or homophobic behavior.

Sexual Issues

The following are two areas that are seldom discussed but can have the greatest negative impact on a coaching career. Failure to appreciate and understand the complexity and

social/psychological impact of this area must be avoided.

1. Sexual Harassment

- Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, and/or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. We see this almost daily in our local, state and national news, so it should come as no surprise that it can occur in high school sports and coaching as well.

2. Sexual Relationships

- Coaches and athletes experience many situations and emotions that can bring them close together. While being close to your athletes is desirable, sexual intimacy certainly is not.
- There is no middle ground here, it simply cannot be tolerated. Keep in mind that it is illegal to have a sexual relationship with your athletes regardless of their age if you coach for an educational organization. Besides being illegal, it is an abuse of power, unethical and grossly irresponsible. Quite simply it is emotionally devastating to the athlete and is destructive to a coach's career.

Coaching Recommendations:

- You must consciously avoid any type of sexual harassment and even guard against the appearance of sexual harassment.
- You also have a duty to prevent sexual harassment by your assistants and your athletes. This is especially true with mixed gender teams. Overt sexual harassment has career-ending implications.
- It is best to broach this topic in team and parent meetings. They should know your standards in this area and what the consequences might be harassing behavior. Make it a part of your handbook.
- There is always a possibility of a false accusation. You can protect yourself by using these ideas to minimize your risk.
- Have others present when you're coaching an athlete and always coach in an open, public area.
- Be very careful about touching athletes when you are coaching. Sometimes it is unavoidable, but be sure to have others present.
- If, for any reason, you inadvertently touch an athlete inappropriately be sure to apologize to the athlete immediately. You should also be sure your administrator is aware of the situation and consider a phone call to the athlete's parents.
- Sexual relationships with athletes are irresponsible and illegal. Your career as a coach will be over and for good reason. That coach is not wanted in the ranks of professional coaches.



Communication

Communication is an essential part of coaching. Although communication can take various forms (verbal, non-verbal, physical) there are some characteristics that all successful coaches use. They communicate in positive terms, have good listening skills, are honest and reliable, and are approachable. Every coach should have these characteristics as standards in their own communication.



However, in today's communication arena we also have to consider social media. This is a powerful and effective means of communication that can make your athletes and teams consistent and nearly instantaneous. But, we have seen instances where athletes, and even coaches, have posted electronic communication that is inappropriate or detrimental to the team and/or individuals.

Coaching Recommendations:

- Provide honest, reliable and constructive communication to your athletes, their parents, media, etc.
- Always emphasize what can be done, provide positive reinforcement, and avoid sarcasm and gossiping.
- Consider a team policy regarding the use of social media. An example can be found in the appendix.

Sexual issues and communication texts are adapted by permission from R. Martens, 2012, Successful Coaching, 4th Edition. All rights reserved. No further distribution is allowed without permission of the publisher.

Bullying

Competitive athletic programs, by their very definition, draw competitive individuals, both coaches and athletes. While these athletes usually display excellent citizenship and sportsmanship, their competitive nature may lead some on a team to bully others. These actions are sometimes out in the open, occurring in locker rooms or even in public. But, just as often, they can now take place as cyber bullying. These types of harassing, belittling and sometimes physical intimidation have no place on any team of either gender. The entire student/athlete experience should be positive and supportive and help teach lessons that can be used in later life. None of this is possible in a threatening, bullying environment.

Coaches must be active and sincere in their stand against any sort of intimidation on their team.

This not only hurts individuals, but an entire team may be affected. These are the kinds of factors that will lead to poor team performance when it is needed most.

Coaching Recommendations:

- When conducting team or parent meetings, or writing program policy, be sure to emphasize that bullying will be considered a zero tolerance infraction. The consequences of bullying must be significant.
- Addressing team communication in social media be sure to point out the risk of cyber bullying and identify it as being the same as physical bullying.
- Make all of your team members aware that bullying will not be tolerated and that the entire team should work together to prevent it. Wenett Martin, volleyball coach at Thunder Basin High School, worked with her team to create a video about bullying. Take a look at the video and imagine the powerful message it created as well as the team building that took place while it was being made. You may watch it here: <https://youtu.be/nE2X5l0feHU>.



Scoreboard and Beyond

The following pages are reprints of articles that were part of the Wyoming Volleyball Coaches Advocacy program. They were written by Angela Sweep, the immensely successful former volleyball coach at Mountain View High School.

These articles contain practical advice that coaches in all sports can use in their programs, plus they have been written in a Wyoming perspective. All coaches can find valuable information here:

Perhaps Angela's philosophy of coaching is best summed up in one of her quotes:

"Coaching is a complex task, requiring a wide variety of skill sets. Learning and improving constantly is the mark of a great coach. Through research, experience and discussion, we can learn and improve in simple yet meaningful ways."

Your Character Becomes Your Destiny

**WATCH YOUR THOUGHTS, FOR THEY BECOME WORDS.
WATCH YOUR WORDS, FOR THEY BECOME ACTIONS. WATCH
YOUR ACTIONS, FOR THEY BECOME HABITS. WATCH YOUR
HABITS, FOR THEY BECOME CHARACTER.
WATCH YOUR CHARACTER, FOR IT BECOMES YOUR DESTINY.**

#1 TRY OUTS AND MAKING TEAMS

Determining teams can be one of the most stressful parts of coaching. The fear of missing a "diamond in the rough" or over-hyping a player are drastic mistakes that can have lasting impact on a team. Then usually, there is the player/parent meeting that usually comes with the decisions. As a coach, what can be done to make all of this easier to manage?

Measuring as much as possible will help you see the players clearly. The most important quality for a player is how what they do affects the score. Attitude, ability, and effort will help their team score. Keeping scores throughout each drill will help to see who will actually help your team win during the season as well.

One absolutely cannot tell, by watching, the difference between a .300 hitter and a .275 hitter. The difference is one hit every two weeks.
-Michael Lewis, MONEYBALL

Measuring statistical information can really help a coach as well. However, remember that the situations should be as game like as possible when the statistics are taken. For example, measuring hitting efficiency when a player has to play defense, transition and hit is drastically different from hitting from a hitting line.

Measuring as much as possible will also help in the player/parent meeting explaining why the decisions were made the way they were. It gives concrete evidence of what happened and what coaches see. Taking personal opinion out of the decisions as much as possible will help everyone with the decisions.

**I've never lost a game. I just ran out
of time.
-Michael Jordan**

TIPS FOR TRYOUTS

1. Use your staff effectively. Make sure everyone knows the plan and has a role in running drills and making evaluations.
2. Get ORGANIZED. Plan minute by minute what will be accomplished.
3. Have a way to identify players at all times. Name tags or numbers should be visible at all times.
4. Reduce standing by players. Everyone should be involved in playing as much as possible.
5. Make the drills game-like.
6. Determine ahead of time what you will do if someone has to miss part or all of the tryouts.
7. Keep detailed scores, stats and records.
8. Communicate with players and parents what you are looking for to determine teams.
9. Determine how you will notify players of the decisions. Posting a list, personal meetings, etc.
10. Be compassionate.

WHAT "MAKES THE TEAM"?

As the coach, determine what qualities and characteristics are most important to have in your players. Is it a good attitude? Is it athletes that you can turn into players? Is it individual skills of your sport? Once you have determined this, make sure that your tryout schedule and plan gives the players opportunity to display the characteristics you are looking for. If you want skilled volleyball players, you probably shouldn't spend time running a mile. If you want competitive players, you need to have competitive drills so you can see how they respond to competition. Make sure the tryout format matches the things you feel are the most important to your team's

#2 PARENTS---FRIEND OR FOE?

We don't have to look far to find a coach that has had a difficult time with parents. Upset parents act out in a variety of ways, some effective and some not so much. In extreme cases, parents have worked to end the coaching career of many coaches. How do we, as coaches, avoid and handle difficult situations with these people that have such a large involvement with our programs? Are these people our FRIEND or FOE? How we view them can greatly affect the interactions we have with them.

FRIEND: In many cases, parents can be a wonderful asset to a program. There are many things in a season that are nice to have, yet difficult for a coach to manage. Examples include but are not limited to fundraising, team dinners, travel logistics and team activities are all things that parents can greatly contribute to in a program. With guidance and cooperation with the coach, parents can work to coordinate these events and even possibly do a BETTER job than the coach would at them. Careful consideration of which parents you involve will help ensure success.

There is not anyone in the world that knows your players better than their parents. Most parents care deeply about their child and the experiences they are having. Parents can be a wonderful resource to find out what motivates a player and receive guidance on how to handle a situation.

ALL TOO OFTEN PARENTS GET THEIR CHILDREN TO BE CONCERNED WITH THE UNCONTROLLABLES IN A COMPETITION, I.E. THE CROWD, THE WEATHER CONDITIONS, HOW IMPORTANT THE CONTEST IS AND HOW GOOD YOUR OPPONENTS ARE. TEACH PARENTS THAT A FOCUS ON THE UNCONTROLLABLES WILL ONLY GET THE CHILD INTO PERFORMANCE TROUBLE. INSTEAD THE ATHLETE SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO FOCUS ON WHAT THEY CAN CONTROL (I.E., THEMSELVES AND THEIR REACTION).

FOE: As stated above, most parents care deeply about their child! However, sometimes this causes them to view situations only from the perspective of their child. When their child is hurting, whether from losing, lost playing time or other situations, the parents' first response is usually to try to fix the problem. This is difficult in a team situation, because many of the solutions the parents may have result in hurting another player. Most of the time, what the parents want for their child just isn't possible because it is a team environment.

TIPS for Working with Parents

- Do not discuss problems or challenges on a day of the game. If approached by a parent, encourage them to set up a meeting for the following day or near future. Emotions are extremely high on game day for you as well as the parents. Let those emotions settle before attempting to solve the problem.
- Understand that parents care about their child more than you, the team or anyone. Their comments and views are not personal attacks on you, but instead attempts to love and support their child.
- Encourage the player to be in the meeting with the parents. Many times the player tells the parents a very different story than reality. It is easier to address these discrepancies with the player in the meeting.
- Always try to have another adult (assistant coach, AD, etc) in the meeting with you. Things said in a meeting can sometimes turn into a He Said – She Said situation. Give yourself back up and validation in the meeting process.
- Try to have a scheduled event close to the meeting time to prevent it from lasting too long. If practice starts at 3:30, ask the parents to meet at 2:45, giving time to discuss the issues, yet a definite time for it to end. Let them know at the beginning of the meeting that you have somewhere you need to be and what time the meeting needs to end. Make sure there is a clock visible during the meeting.
- Most parents just want someone to LISTEN and acknowledge the difficulty their child is experiencing. Listen FIRST. Let them talk without getting defensive and defending attacks.
- Once the parent has addressed their concerns, explain the situation from the perspective of the team and coach. Then reflect it back to the parent and ask, “What do YOU want me to DO about the situation?” Most of the time, they will realize that they really don’t want the situation to change, they just need to feel heard. Sometimes they will have a very simple solution. Work to find a solution that everyone can agree on.
- Sometimes the only solution is to agree to disagree. The process of discussion is valuable, yet there are many different perspectives on sport and how to manage a program. Be respectful of opinions, but know you are the coach and ultimately have the decisions to make.
- Be sure to inform your Athletic Director of any parent interaction or situations that could possibly arise. The more informed he/she is, the more they will be able to help you.

#3 POST SEASON AWARDS

As the season draws to a close, there are opportunities to honor athletes in a variety of ways. While all of these awards are a great honor, sometimes it becomes a great difficulty for coaches. After a season of preaching TEAM, we then have to identify our best players. Sometimes this is easy, but sometimes it can be difficult. Comparing the importance of players can cause uneasy feelings. Of course, every parent feels their child is the MVP, which adds to the difficulty of the decisions about who to nominate and vote for.

Possible STATE WIDE awards include: All-Conference, All-State, and sometimes All-Star Teams. Some classifications or conferences have a Player of the Year or a Defensive Player of the Year.

As a coach, you have the options to give endless possibilities of awards within your team. Some coaches will make sure every player gets some type of award or recognition. Most Improved, Most Inspirational or statistical category leaders are just a few of the options. The quality of the postseason recognition can help players feel appreciated and valued. It can help motivate them to work in the off season. Everyone likes to feel valued and appreciated. Take time to consider how your players are leaving the season. Do they feel positive and excited about what they accomplished? Did the season end on a tough loss and disappointment? These factors can affect what you want to do and focus on with the awards.

TIPS for Post Season Awards Voting

Join the Wyoming Coaches Association so that you are able to vote in the All-State voting. Know when the meetings for voting are and make every possible arrangement to be there. Even if your team doesn’t qualify for the State Tournament, try to be present at the meeting to participate in the voting.

Have statistics and information about the players you are going to nominate READY prior to the meeting to present to the other coaches. In essence, you are campaigning for your player. Many coaches haven’t seen your team play so therefore don’t know your players. When voting, consider all aspects of the game. Remember the value of each player regardless of position.

Remember these awards are individual. Representation from every team is not necessary. If it is questionable, nominate the athlete. You can always discuss it in the meeting, but if you do not nominate them, then it is all on you. If you nominate, you put it in the committee of voters’ control. Do not discuss or publicize who received awards until AFTER the State tournament.

#4 Love of the Game

Why do you coach? Why do schools have sports programs? Why do players come out for a sport? These are good questions to ask yourself before each season. To begin the season with the answers to these questions, then build each day around them, will help you and your players have a positive season. Helping your athletes develop a LOVE of the game will help them have the intrinsic motivation to do what you ask each day in practice. The team becomes theirs that they want to work for instead of yours that is making them work for. LOVE of the game is the best motivator.

Nobody Messes Up on Purpose

No matter the level you are coaching, it is important to remember the players are KIDS. Their brains are not fully developed, their muscle memory has not been created, and their knowledge of the game is limited. It is our job to guide them to learn these things. One of my wise assistant coaches would always remind me, "Coach, they are 14, 15, 16 year old girls." Basically he was saying, "Be patient with them and help them to LEARN." Players commit a lot of time and effort by coming out for a sport. They are trying the best they know. Even if we feel the effort isn't where it should be, it is our job to help them learn what a true effort is. Players are not messing up on purpose. Help them learn from mistakes through patience and teaching.

Somebody's Baby

Each player in your gym has parents, grandparents, etc. that love them deeply. To these people, the most important thing is that their loved one is valued and treated kindly. A wise coach once told me that it is easier to work with upset parents or difficult situations with players if you know inside that you truly treated each player with absolute respect and kindness all the time! Yelling, belittling and degrading comments give the parents legitimate reasons to be upset. Nobody is motivated through yelling. It may seem to produce short-term results, but it does not work long term. Remember that each of the players are someone's pride and joy. Help the players learn and grow in each situation. Help them develop the LOVE of the Game.

THEY SAID IT BEST!

"I never yelled at my players much. That would have been artificial stimulation, which doesn't last very long. I think it's like love and passion. Passion won't last as long as love. When you are dependent on passion, you need more and more of it to make it work. It's the same with yelling."

— John Wooden

"Remember, results aren't the criteria for success — it's the effort made for achievement that is most important."

— John Wooden

POST SEASON AWARD NIGHT TIPS

Head Coach

- Thank everyone who helped with your program during the year.
- Keep comments about the season short and positive.
- Make sure every player, coach, trainer and manager is introduced by name.
- Comments about individual players should be kept brief.
- The majority of your player comments should be about your seniors.
- Do your talking for the team. Players should rarely be given an open microphone.
- You control the ceremony, not the parents or players.
- Do not name next year's captains.

Junior Varsity and/or Freshman Coaches

- Thank all those people that assisted your portion of the program.
- Make your comments brief. The varsity coach should have the majority of time.
- Introduce every player. You may have them stand as a group, but introduce each of them.
- Be positive. If you do not have something nice to say, move on.
- Do not make predictions about future success for younger team members.

#5 IDEAS FOR MANAGERS

Managers can be such a fabulous asset to a program! Praising them to parents, players and others can really help managers feel valued in a program. The more valued they feel, the more productive they will be.

Before Practice:

- Get Water, Make Copies, Set up drills for Practice
- Take attendance, set up clock/music

During Practice:

- Stat Drills as needed
- Shag balls and hand to coaches
- Get ice for players as needed, Score Drills

After Practice:

- Record scores and information from practice in computer/notebook
- Empty water and put away container
- Count balls/ equipment
- Clean up gym/training facilities

Game Days:

- Get all equipment on the bus, provide managers with checklist
- Manage the scorebook and statistics for each match, Video contests
- Get water for each team before and during games

Season:

- Record Equipment check in/out

CLEAR EXPECTATIONS

After a few seasons of struggling with frustration with managers, I began to evaluate the situation. I realized that I was expecting these students to just KNOW what I wanted them to do as a manager. This was not fair and set them up for failure.

I began to change how I worked with them by setting clear expectations for each day and situation. At the beginning of each season, I gave each manager a checklist of things they are to do as managers. This helped everyone have a positive season!

#6 Failing to Plan, is Planning to Fail

The season is short! Every team has the same days of practice. As a coach, your decisions about when and how to practice are crucial. MORE practice is not always best. Practices lose productivity if they are longer than two hours. Drills longer than 30 minutes lose productivity. Carefully planning each practice will help your team maximize the precious minutes of the season.

The teams that improve the most are those that best use the minutes in the season.

1. **Have a specific start and end time and stick to it!**

Things come up each day that may make it seem difficult to start on time. Discipline to start on time takes effort and planning. Establish a routine for each day so players can begin practicing on their own even if you are not able to. Ending on time will help parents and players have a positive attitude about practice. You will need to pace the drills throughout practice to make sure you get through everything you want to.

2. **Have a written plan for each practice.**

After a few years of experimenting, we found it most productive to plan practice for the next day right after today's practice. Then we had some time to think through, re-think or analyze the plan. Planning details of scoring methods, team assignments and transitions are very helpful. The practice plan should be shared and visible for all throughout practice.

3. **Utilize assistant coaches, managers and extra players.**

Maximize each minute by maximizing everyone in the gym. Assistant coaches can manage drills, work individually or with small groups. Managers can toss balls or keep score. Extra players can give feedback to others playing. Make plans for each person in the program to be involved and doing something. This not only makes practice more productive, but gives everyone ownership in the program.

THEY SAID IT BEST!

"Time lost is time lost. It's gone forever. Some people tell themselves that they will work twice as hard tomorrow to make up for what they did not do today. People should always do their best. If they work twice as hard tomorrow, then they should have also worked twice as hard today. That would have been their best."

— John Wooden

#7 WORKING WITH PARENTS

Working with parents can sometimes be the most difficult part of coaching. As much as we would love for every parent to see the big picture and put the TEAM first, it actually rarely happens. Parents generally have one concern---their child.

Remember, most parents have put a lot of time, money and work into helping their child be an athlete. They want their child to be happy. Try to see situations from their perspective. This is a list of pointers that can be shared with parents prior to the season.

Role of Parents

- Make sure that your child knows that you love and support them, whether they start or sit on the bench.
- Try to be honest with yourself and your child about their athletic ability, skill level and attitude.
- Be helpful, but don't coach your child. They need you to be a parent, not a coach.
- Don't compare your child with other players on the team. The skills the coach is looking for are not necessarily the ones that you are seeing from the stands.
- Remember that kids tend to exaggerate. Temper your reaction to what they tell you about praise or criticism from the coach.
- Remind your child that winning is important, but not everything. They should always be respectful towards other players, officials and coaches.
- Being negative towards teammates or coaches will only result in your child losing valuable playing time.
- Model good sportsmanship for your child. Officials aren't perfect, but they represent authority that must be respected.

Parental Questions and Concerns

1. The player needs to take the question or concern to their coach. That will make the coach aware of the situation so they can help find solutions.
2. If this does not solve the problem, set up an appointment with the coaching staff. Never approach a coach on a game day with a complaint.
3. If there is a need for further action an appointment with the Athletic Director will be arranged.
4. It is EXTREMELY important to follow these guidelines!



WINNING

What are YOU doing to help our team WIN?

	Coaches	Players	Parents
Athletic Ability	*Provide opportunity for strength & agility training *Provide adequate physical conditioning *Position players appropriately to maximize strengths	*Utilize opportunities given to build strength and agility *Push individual body to provide maximum growth and development *Practice good eating and sleeping habits for maximum performance	*Provide opportunity for players to develop strength and agility *Encourage and provide good eating and sleeping habits *Encourage players to always give their best effort
Fundamentals	*Provide opportunity for instruction during and off season *Study and learn best techniques and implement to the team *Emphasize correct technique consistently	*Utilize opportunities given to learn and develop proper fundamentals *Listen, learn and implement instruction *Be mindful to continually improve fundamentals	*Learn the proper fundamental performance for improved discussion and encouragement of the players
Team Strategy	*Study and learn the best techniques and apply to variables of the specific game and season *Implement learning to the team for understanding and execution	*Listen and work to implement the proper strategies effectively *Become a student of the game, constantly learning the how and why of the game	*Encourage execution of the game plan to the players *Understand that all players working together in the wrong system is better than a few players working separately in the right system.
Team Attitude	*Provide a positive practice climate *Communicate clearly expectations and situations *Push each player to be the best they can be	*Respect teammates and coaches *Talk positively about the team and coaches *Put team above self *Consistently Work HARD and COMPETE	*Respect team and coaches *Talk positively about team and coaches *Provide treats, team nights, posters, etc. for the team *Communicate concerns effectively

Before you ACT, THINK...will this help our team WIN?



The appendix contains a variety of forms, lists, quizzes, and self-evaluations. These serve as a quick reference to a number of topics that relate to successful coaching. Some are appropriate handouts for players, coaches, or parents. All members of the WCA are granted permission to use these as they are, or to make changes appropriate for your school and community.

STUDENT ATHLETE GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

As a public institution of education,

Public Schools supports and encourages its student athletes' rights to freedom of speech, expression and association, including the use of social networks. Nevertheless, as representatives of the school, student athletes are held to a higher standard and are role models. Playing and competing for _____ is a privilege, not a right. In this context, each student athlete has the responsibility to portray him or herself, the team, and Public Schools in a positive manner at all times. Therefore, any online postings to Facebook.com, MySpace.com, Xanga.com, YouTube.com, Friendster.com and other internet sites, as well as Twitter, blogs, chat rooms and other such electronic media, must be consistent with federal and state laws, team and program policies and regulations, and WHSAA rules and policies. Student athletes will be held responsible for their actions. Ignorance of these regulations and policies does not excuse student athletes from adhering to them.

In addition, student athletes must keep in mind that information which is posted can adversely impact personal safety, student status, and career advancement as the postings are easily accessible to reporters, potential employers, law enforcement officials, and college admissions offices. Student athletes are expected to post only information and images that appropriately represent themselves, their families, the athletic program, and the community of _____.

Everything you post is public information – any text or photo placed online is completely out of your control the moment it is placed online – even if you limit access to your site. Information (including pictures, videos, comments and posters) may be accessible even after you remove it.

These guidelines are presented as expectations for student-athletes to follow:

1. You should not post any information, photos, comments, videos or other items online that would embarrass or reflect negatively on you, your family, your team, the department of athletics, or _____ Public Schools.
2. For your safety and privacy, you should not post your home address, local address, phone number(s), date of birth, class schedule, team travel arrangements, team hotel and restaurants or other personal information including your whereabouts at any given time or place. This will minimize the potential of being stalked, assaulted, or the victim

of other criminal activity.

3. What you post may affect your future. Many employers and college admissions officers review social networking sites as part of their overall evaluation of an applicant. Carefully consider how you want people to perceive you before you give them a chance to misinterpret your information (including pictures, videos, comments and posters).
4. Be mindful that internet postings that show images or language reflecting sexual misconduct, underage drinking, violence, hazing, use of illegal drugs or controlled substances may affect your status as a member of the athletic program.
5. Be aware that the department of athletics may monitor the internet sites for the sole purpose of determining whether you are in compliance. If it is determined that you have violated these expectations, you may be asked to remove the images from the website or be subject to the loss of athletic privileges and other sanctions as appropriate, including (but not limited to) being benched or dismissed from a team.
6. Derogatory language or remarks about teammates or coaches from _____ Public Schools or any other school is unacceptable. Disrespecting the athletic program, _____ Public Schools, or other teams will NOT be tolerated.
7. Demeaning statements or physical/emotional threats to another person is unacceptable behavior. (This is known as cyber-bullying and is against the law).

Athlete Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

ATHLETIC PROGRAM EDUCATIONAL-BASED ATHLETIC EXPERIENCE

Student athletes are committed to understanding that participation is a privilege. It is something that needs to be earned every day. You are provided an educationally based experience that is an extension of the classroom. Within this experience are many life lessons, which are rooted in these core traits. These traits complete the statement:

Our athletes are people who demonstrate....

Accountability - Putting forth the effort and attitude to make yourself and your team better by doing what is right even when no one is watching. Your success in the classroom, community, and in your sport starts with your decisions.

Respect - Respect of coaches, teammates, opponents, fans and all other aspects of the program allow you the privilege to participate in an educationally based sport.

Coachability - Having the desire to improve and the will to accept constructive feedback from coaches and peers. Being willing to do the extra work to be the best at your role.

Passion - No team can be successful without having passion. Love for the program and the desire to make those around you better portrays a team-first attitude.

Discipline - Training hard, making good life choices, being early and staying late. If a student athlete is disciplined they will value these things.

A Spirit of Sacrifice - A real student athlete will give up something temporarily for the purpose of making others better. You can't have it all and do it all. Over-committing and under-delivering are not endearing qualities.

Integrity - A student athlete must possess a moral foundation when it comes to fulfilling his/her expectations. Playing above and beyond the rules shows that you are someone to be trusted in the classroom, in the community, and in competition.

Commitment - Making a conscious decision to fully invest in the team pursuits and protecting your team from things that could get them off the path.

Unity - Treat your teammates, teachers, and coaches how you want to be treated. Choose words, actions and responsibilities that draw you closer to the team goals.

I understand that not striving for these qualities can result in consequences such as being benched, being removed from the team, or whatever disciplinary action is deemed necessary.

Athlete Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Keys to Developing and Maintaining a Positive Mental Attitude

Have trouble keeping a PMA? Work these tips into your daily life.

1. **Greet each day with a smile** and look forward to making a difference in the lives of others.
2. When introducing yourself in any new association, **take the initiative and volunteer your name first**, extend your hand for a firm handshake, and maintain eye contact when you speak.
3. **Be enthusiastic!** Move vigorously and use expressive gestures when talking. Walk with a confident stride.
4. **Speak in a loud, clear, voice.** Always use affirmative statements. Work the phrases “I Can” and “I Will” into conversations.
5. Concentrate on viewing yourself as a successful person. **You become that which you think about the most.**
6. It becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.
7. Look for good in the actions of others. **Treat everyone with dignity and respect.**
8. **Be polite and considerate** in your communication with others. Say, “Please” and “Thank You” and “You’re Welcome.” Compliment others on their good points.
9. Remember the **“Golden Rule”** in all your actions. This means more than doing unto others, as you would have them do unto you; it means refraining from doing unto others that which you would **not** like them to do to you.
10. Make good decisions when using the **Internet** and when sending **text messages**.
11. Demonstrate interest in the ideas and actions of others. **Be an active listener.**
12. **Have a plan to deal with criticism.** Consider the source and act accordingly.
13. **Be yourself.** Forget about impressing others, be the person you are most comfortable with – you.
14. **Always maintain your composure and self-control.** Consider the consequences before taking action and take personal responsibility for your actions.
15. Express a difference of opinion in a **constructive manner**.
16. **Exercise your mind and body** on a regular basis.
17. **View mistakes as learning experiences.** Realize that failure is often a test of your belief and conviction. Most of the great people in history have failed often. The important thing is to be able to bounce back when faced with adversity,
18. **Accept the things about yourself that cannot be changed.** This includes the shape of your face, the sound of your voice, the color of your skin, your height, etc.
19. **When someone pays you a compliment, accept it** and reply with a simple, “Thank You!”
20. **Condition your mind to look for the positive things in your life.** “Instead of seeing barriers, see hurdles; instead of obstacles, see opportunities; instead of problems, see solutions.” Begin each day with a PMA!

The following is an example of a typical Wyoming Coaching Contract. Pay special attention to the written portion.

This document is to formalize an assignment to extra-duty, made and entered into between _____ County School District No. ____ and a teacher and/or coach holding a valid teaching and/or coaching certificate issued by the State of Wyoming Department of Public Instruction. All Coaches/Teachers who do not provide a copy of their current Wyoming License to HR will be considered volunteers until current Licenses are provided.

COACH/TEACHER NAME: _____

ASSIGNMENT: _____

SALARY: _____ BUDGET CODE: _____

As an extra-duty assignment, employees of _____ County School District No. ____ do not acquire tenure or continuing contract status in any extra-duty assignment. The Superintendent and/or Board of Trustees retains the sole and exclusive right to terminate this assignment at any time without the requirement of stating a reason or holding a hearing regarding the decision to terminate the assignment. In the event of a termination prior to completion of the assignment, extra-duty compensation as set forth below shall be prorated based upon the proportionate part of the assignment that has been completed. Questions, concerns, and/or assistance, please contact administrator in charge of program assigned. Questions regarding payment, contact District Business Office.

☐ Valid Wyoming Certificate Required

☐ No Certificate Required

COACH/TEACHER SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

DIRECTOR SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

Self-Description Inventory

This simple self-evaluation can be an effective tool for your players as an off-season leadership activity.

Instructions: Respond to each statement by placing an "X" in the blank that best describes you. If the statement is not like you at all, check space number one. If it fits perfectly check space five. The spaces in between indicate various degrees of fit. If you cannot decide if it does or doesn't apply, select space three. This helps you identify your strengths and areas that need improvement.

		1	2	3	4	5
1	I eat the foods I should.					
2	I get enough good exercise.					
3	I seldom lack energy or tire very easily.					
4	I do not use drugs or alcohol.					
5	I am working on improving my leadership ability.					
6	I do not smoke cigarettes.					
7	I have good study habits.					
8	Making good grades is important to me.					
9	I use good judgment when spending money.					
10	I am seldom influenced by others to make bad decisions.					
11	I am a person who can be trusted.					
12	I possess high moral values.					
13	I am willing to be rejected by my friends before I will sacrifice my values.					
14	I am capable of earning another degree after I graduate from high school.					
15	Seldom do I ever make an effort to avoid hard work.					
16	I limit the amount of time I spend on Facebook and playing					

	computer games.					
17	I have at least three friends whom I trust and respect.					
18	I'm comfortable with my decision-making ability.					
19	I am a leader rather than a follower.					
20	Most people see me as being open-minded to their ideas.					
21	People can always depend on me.					
22	I set goals and work toward accomplishing them.					
23	I seldom criticize other people behind their backs.					
24	I possess a good sense of humor.					
25	I have little difficulty concentrating in class and on assigned tasks.					
26	I am concerned about my appearance and making a positive first impression.					
27	I keep my temper under control.					
28	I do my best in class and in activities in which I choose to participate.					
29	I am a confident person.					
30	I make good decisions in my personal life.					

Determine Your Leadership Potential

Listed below are the common characteristics of proven leaders. How do you shape up as a leader?

Instructions: Respond to each item by placing an (X) in the space that best expresses how the statement describes you. If the statement is not like you at all, check space number one. If it fits perfectly, check space five. The spaces in between allow you to indicate various degrees of fit. If you are torn between feeling it does or does not apply, check space number three.

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Goals - I am a goal setter. I have a strong sense of purpose and know where I am going with my life. I have written goals.					
2	Positive Mental Attitude - I possess a high degree of confidence and self-worth. I approach every new day with positive expectancy.					
3	Persistence - I have the ability to bounce back from failure. I view failure as a learning experience rather than a setback.					
4	Risk Taker - I am willing to attempt new tasks and welcome a positive challenge even if I am not certain of success.					
5	Decision Maker - I understand the decision-making process. Making decisions usually comes easy for me.					
6	Courage - I am able to take a firm stand even when my position is not really popular. I am in charge of my life.					
7	Seek New Learning - I find it rewarding to acquire new skills and information. I plan to be a life-long learner.					
8	Enthusiasm - I get excited about projects I believe in and possess a great deal of energy to complete them.					
9	Focus On Success - I can accept constructive criticism and value the opinions of people I respect.					
10	Seek To Serve Others - I am able to work with other people and find teamwork enjoyable.					
11	Sense of Humor - I realize the importance of humor and am able to laugh at myself.					
12	Integrity - I take pride in being truthful and in keeping my word.					

13	Communication – I am effective in expressing my thoughts to others in a clear manner. I am an active listener and show interest in what is said.					
14	Initiative – I am a self-starter.					
Total Score						

Scoring: Add up your total points to determine how prepared you are to be a positive leader. The following scale will give you some idea of your leadership potential at this time.

- **60 – 70 Outstanding leadership potential! You are ready to take on major tasks.**
- **50 – 59 An impressive score! You possess the key characteristics of leadership.**
- **40 – 49 Improve in several categories and you will become an excellent leader!**
- **30 – 39 Much potential exists. Keep working on a self-improvement plan.**
- **Below 29 – It is up to you to alter your attitude and lifestyle to develop more leadership ability.**

Criticism: Constructive or Destructive?

Have a preconceived plan to deal with criticism.

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary definition of a Critic is “one who expresses a reasoned opinion on any matter especially involving a judgment of its value, truth, righteousness, beauty, or technique.” In spite of this definition, many people view “criticism” as something negative. As a coach it is important to differentiate between “Constructive Criticism” and “Destructive Criticism.” Keep these points in mind when determining how to react to criticism.

- **Consider the source.** Do you respect the individual? If yes, listen intently and determine the nature of the criticism. If you don't respect the person, listen and thank them for his or her concern but concentrate on positive thoughts. Unfortunately, some people are negative thinkers and enjoy pointing out what is wrong rather than working toward making it right.
- **Stay calm and smile.** Research tells us that up to 85% of communication is non-verbal. Maintain a pleasant disposition and be aware of your facial expression and body language. A sincere smile with positive eye contact will often moderate even the most upset individuals. Much can be gained by allowing a person to ventilate without striking back. Eventually he or she will run out of things to say.
- **Listen and think before responding.** If someone is emotional, the worst action a person can take is to become emotional also. This can lead to a shouting match where neither party is listening. Once again, stay calm and choose your words carefully if you wish to respond. Remember: **Stimulus - Think – Respond.**
- **Consider the other person's point of view.** By putting yourself in the other person's shoes it is possible to view the issue from another perspective. Often a person is fixated on viewing the issue from only one point of view. This will lead to convoluted thinking and only generate more controversy.
- **Recognize constructive criticism.** It is not as easy to recognize constructive critical statements about you or your work as you may think. Communication is complex, and your sensitivities and prejudices work against the proper deciphering of the message. At times, what can be interpreted as criticism might actually be a positive suggestion. Some people lack the ability to communicate their thoughts in a positive manner.
- **Consider the possibility that you might be wrong.** As a person matures, it is easy to get in a rut and resist change. Keep an open mind toward the ideas of others and constantly look for more efficient ways to perform tasks. “But, this is the way we have always done it,” doesn't mean it is the right way to do it.
- **Act on constructive criticism.** After careful analysis you may realize that the criticism was just and some change is merited. Even the best of us are wrong at times, and it

takes mature people comfortable in their own skin to admit when they are wrong. Keep an open mind and be receptive to the ideas of others.

- **Maintain your self-esteem.** It is common for a person to interpret all criticism as derogatory and as a personal attack. In most cases, the person who is the critic is simply expressing displeasure with the policy or action and is not attacking you personally. When dealing with the public it is necessary to have thick skin and know when to consider the source and not take it personally.

“No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.”

Eleanor Roosevelt

Effective Leadership - What is your Leadership Style?

Five styles of leadership can be easily identified. It is beneficial to recognize the various types of leadership and the strengths and weaknesses of each. The most effective leaders move among these styles, adopting the one that meets the needs of the moment. Rank your most common style from 1 to 5.

_____ **Visionary** - This style is most appropriate when a group needs a new direction. Its goal is to move people towards a new set of shared dreams. Visionary leaders have a good idea where a group is going, but not how it will get there – setting people free to experiment and take calculated risks.

- **How it builds teamwork:** Moves people toward shared dreams. **Impact on the attitude of others:** Most often it is strongly positive.
- **When appropriate:** When changes require a change, or when a clear direction is needed. **Weakness:** This style requires an experienced leader with highly developed communication skills.

_____ **Coaching** - This one-on-one style focuses on developing individuals, showing them how to improve their performance, and helping to connect their goals to team or organizational goals. Coaching works best, with people who are self-starters and want to improve.

- **How it builds teamwork:** Connects what a person wants with the team or organization's goals. **Impact on the attitude of others:** Highly positive.
- **When appropriate:** To help a person improve performance by building long-term capabilities. **Weakness:** The person must be self-motivated to rise above previous levels of performance.

_____ **Democratic** - This style draws on people's knowledge and skills, and creates a group commitment to the resulting goals. It works best when the direction the team or organization should take is unclear and the leader needs to tap the collective wisdom of the group. A problem is that this approach can be disastrous in times of crisis, when urgent events demand quick decisions.

- **How it builds teamwork:** Values a person's input and gets commitment through participation. **Impact on the attitude of others:** Usually positive.
- **When appropriate:** To get valuable input from others.
- **Weakness:** People must have a sufficient knowledge base to offer meaningful input.

_____ **Pacesetter** - In this style, the leader sets high standards for performance. He or she is obsessive about doing things better and faster, and asks the same of everyone. This style should be used sparingly, because it can undercut morale and make people feel as if they are failing.

- **How it builds teamwork:** It sets challenging and exciting goals.
- **Impact on the attitude of others:** When it is poorly executed it can be very negative. **When appropriate:** To get high-quality results from others who are motivated.
- **Weakness:** Too often, the leader tries to do too much.

_____ **Authoritative** - This is a classic model of "military" style leadership – probably the most often used, but the least often effective. Because it rarely involves praise and frequently employs criticism. It undercuts morale and team unity. It is most effective in a crisis, when an urgent turnaround is needed. Even the modern military has come to recognize its limited usefulness.

- **How it builds teamwork:** Soothes fears by giving clear direction in an emergency. **Impact on climate:** Because it is often misused it is often highly negative.
- **When appropriate:** In a crisis, to kick-start a turnaround, or with problem people. **Weakness:** Use sparingly, and be sure to exercise emotional self-control.

Effective Communication: The Art of Listening

When the word communication is used, many people think of speaking, but the true communicators know listening is extremely important. As a head coach it is essential to listen to the concerns of your assistants and players.

Instructions: Respond to each item by placing an (X) in the space that best expresses how the statement describes you. If the statement is not like you at all, check space number one. If it fits perfectly, check space five. The spaces in between allow you to indicate various degrees of fit. If you are unsure of if it does or does not apply, check space number three, the halfway mark.

	1	2	3	4	5
1 Listen with your eyes - I maintain eye contact and focus on what the speaker is saying. This sends the message that I am interested in what is being said.					
2 Use positive body language - I am an active listener and demonstrate my interest by leaning forward, occasionally nodding, using facial expressions, and verbally responding with brief affirmations.					
3 Pause before replying - I pause to guarantee that I don't interrupt the speaker. This also indicates that I am pondering what is being said. The intelligent person is patient and aware of the power of non-verbal communication.					
4 Use names - Periodically throughout the communication process I use the name of the person. This demonstrated a personal interest in the individual.					
5 Ask follow-up questions - I often answer questions by asking follow-up questions. This indicates that I am listening and it keeps the conversation flowing.					
6 Ask for an example - To make sure I understand what has been said, I periodically ask the speaker to cite an example.					
7 Sum up what has been stated - By paraphrasing the speaker's words I confirm that I have been listening. This is also an excellent time to check for understanding.					
8 Take notes - By taking notes I send the message that I am sincere					

	in following up on the key points.					
9	Eliminate distractions - When the conversation approaches a more serious level I make it a point to be more aware of the surroundings and avoid potential distractions.					
10	Build Trust - I'm non-judgmental and keep an open mind toward the speaker. The more I listen, the more I build trust and understanding.					
Total Score						

Scoring: Add up your total points to determine how you rank as an effective listener. The following scale will give you some idea of your listening effectiveness at this time.

- **44 – 50 Outstanding listening ability! You must share your techniques with others.**
- **36 – 43 An impressive score! You possess the key characteristics of effective listeners.**
- **28 – 35 Improve in several categories and you will become an excellent listener.**
- **20 – 27 Much potential exists. Keep working on a self-improvement plan.**
- **Below 20 – It is up to you to alter your attitude and approach to develop a better listening ability.**

Eleven Keys to Coaching Longevity

**Too many good coaches leave the profession because of a bad experience.
Consider these principles.**

1. Keep a Positive Mental Attitude!

After the Bay of Pigs fiasco President Kennedy remarked, "Victory has many fathers, defeat is an orphan." Unfortunately, this is often true in sports. You will find the true content of your character by how you react to adversity. Stay positive after a loss and during a difficult season.

2. Coach with Passion.

Emerson stated "nothing great was ever accomplished without enthusiasm." Coach on the run and speak with confidence and conviction. Attitudes are contagious; make yours worth catching.

3. Have a Plan for Criticism.

Be prepared for unjust comments from people who are quick to find fault. Consider the source of the comment; if you respect the person speak with him or her. If you don't respect him or her, ignore it.

4. Never Expect Gratitude from Teenagers.

Seldom do teenagers realize the amount of time, effort and commitment the coach puts in to help them reach their full potential. They tend to focus on their own lives and rarely express appreciation. Your gratitude will come from the personal satisfaction in building a cohesive team.

5. Work Smarter not Harder.

Concentrate on the tasks that bring the greatest return on the time invested. Too often a coach will work hard, but much of the effort does not bring about the desired result. Do a task analysis to determine a list of priorities. Be sure to delegate proper tasks to assistants.

6. Know Which Battles to Lose.

Be flexible when dealing with others. At times you may have what seems to be a great idea, but there is a time when you have to redirect your efforts when your idea is met with too much opposition. This is important to remember when working with administrators and faculty members.

7. Find Time for Your Family.

You spend so much time working on your sport and building a championship team, but make sure you schedule in time for your wife and family. During the season set aside a certain time for family concerns. Your children will grow up in a hurry--- invest in them now!

8. Keep a Sense of Humor.

Be passionate about your sport, but make sure you and your players are having fun.

Enjoy the light moments in practice and have a good laugh when the opportunity comes up.

9. Teach Life-long Lessons.

Much has been said about the building of character through participation in athletics. Many of the characteristics necessary for success in life are reinforced through athletic competition.

10. Don't Discuss Playing Time with Parents.

Explain to the players and parents if there is a question about playing time it is the responsibility of the player to speak with the coach about this concern. Communication is part of the maturation process.

11. Keep the Game in Perspective.

Know that you expect the best from yourself and the players. What more can you give? Your health, family, integrity and career must not be compromised in pursuit of victory.

How's Your Attitude?

During the course of a day you interact with many people. This fun activity will help you determine how they perceive you.

Directions: The decisions you make help form your attitude. Take this simple self-evaluation by checking the blank that best describes you. Add up the "This is me!" column and use the scale to determine your rank.

		This is not me.	This could be me?	This is me!
1	When my alarm goes off I hit the "snooze button" or shut the alarm off and go back to sleep. I had too little rest and hated having to get up and go to work.			
2	I find something to wear, but realize clothes are just to cover the body. Staying in fashion or matching colors really doesn't concern me.			
3	Glancing at the morning newspaper I realize this is the worst condition our country has ever been in and it is just a matter of time before the economy will crumble.			
4	Most people drive too slowly and they bog me down. I would like to drive a tank so I can get to work on time. Everyone is a terrible driver but me.			
5	People are much too happy at work. They must be faking it. When someone says, "Good morning," I respond with, "What's good about it?"			
6	When I'm asked, "How are you today?" I proceed to tell about my physical ailments and personal problems. People should know just how tough my life is.			
7	I make it a point to complain about co-workers, even though I wouldn't consider speaking with them privately. Many people just don't know how to work.			
8	Everyone in the supermarket is conspiring to slow me up. The express line is closed because they saw me coming. Why can't people move faster?			

9	I go to my child's game and he/she is sitting on the bench because the coach is, "playing favorites again." Someday I'll give the coach a piece of my mind.			
10	I'm definitely overworked and underpaid and no one appreciates everything I do. I should have taken up a more rewarding occupation.			
11	When playing golf, cards or other games I will do anything to win. A little cheating really doesn't hurt anyone and it is acceptable as long as no one finds out.			
12	Anyone who doesn't share my political beliefs really doesn't understand the issues and is poorly informed.			
13	I know pretty much everything there is to know about my job or profession. I see little need to take classes, go to workshops or waste time with more training.			
14	I only have a few more years left before I can retire. It really doesn't pay to, "rock the boat." If I suggest changing some things it will just create more work for me.			
15	I'm so busy with work. It's impossible for me to find time to spend with the family.			
	Total Score			

Rate Yourself: Total the "This is me! Column.

- 0 – 3 Congratulations! You have a super Positive Mental Attitude!
- 4 – 9 Your attitude needs work. Develop a plan to improve your daily outlook.
- 10 – 15 "Attitudes are Contagious." Please stay away from other people.

Determine Your PMA

This activity provides you with the opportunity to determine your overall attitude as you perform your daily tasks. Do you see barriers or hurdles, obstacles or opportunities, problems or solutions?

Directions: Your perspective can have a powerful influence on your well-being. Take this quiz to determine where you fall on the PMA scale. For each statement choose the ranking that describes you best. Then see the answer key below.

- **Very True of Me = 4**
- **True of Me = 3**
- **Seldom True of Me = 2**
- **Never True of Me = 1**

		4	3	2	1
1	It doesn't take me long to shake off a bad mood.				
2	In general I try not to set my hopes too high so I won't be disappointed.				
3	I can be comfortable with nearly all kinds of people.				
4	I believe in the saying, "Where there's a will, there's a way."				
5	I think it is hard to get ahead without cutting corners here and there.				
6	I expect that I will achieve most of my life goals.				
7	I try to make light of my problems when possible.				
8	I go out of my way to flatter important people.				
9	Before an interview, I am usually confident that it will go well.				
10	In my opinion, honesty is always the best policy.				
11	When I make a decision on my own, it's usually a poor one.				
12	I have a tendency to make mountains out of molehills.				
13	If I had to choose between happiness and greatness, I'd choose greatness.				

14	I'm afraid the future of mankind doesn't look too bright.				
15	When the weatherman predicts a 50 percent chance of rain, I expect to see rain.				
16	My most difficult battles are with myself.				
	Total Score				

1. Disregard questions 8, 10, 13, and 16; they are "filler" questions, designed to minimize subconscious bias in your response.
2. Add the numbers you selected for questions 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 9.
3. Then add the numbers you selected for questions 2, 5, 11, 12, 14, and 15.
4. Now subtract the second from the first total.

Answer Key

-18 to -5 Points

You see the glass as half empty which may be your way of coping with anxiety. Negativity is most likely causing you to miss out on opportunities in life and excessive pessimism is associated with depression.

-4 to 4 Points

While you usually maintain a sense of hope, you're still highly aware of potential disappointments. Negative expectations may make it tough for you to feel excited about your prospects. Less enthusiasm can mean less motivation.

5 to 10 Points

From your perspective things usually work out. Your ability to focus on the potential for good allows you to see the best in yourself too. People who score in this category tend to be more outgoing, resilient, and happier.

11 to 18 Points

You are one of the few super-optimists. Only 10 percent of people score above 10 points. You are confident of your ability to shape situations to your advantage. Be careful of unrealistic expectations and overconfidence.

Coaching for Peak Performance

Research indicates championship coaches possess these characteristics. How do you measure up?

- 1. Foresight and the ability to carry out effective planning.**
Do you set goals and develop a plan to follow to reach those goals? Do you always have a practice plan? A game plan?
- 2. A drive toward transcending previous levels of accomplishment.**
Are you willing to commit yourself to rise above previous performances? Do your team's show consistent improvement as the season progresses?
- 3. High levels of self-confidence and self-worth.**
Do you view yourself as an effective coach? Would you be difficult to replace?
- 4. A high need for responsibility and control.**
Do you like to take action and be in charge? Do you enjoy competition and the opportunity to make critical decisions?
- 5. Well-developed communication skills in both personal and professional areas.**
Are you capable of effectively communicating your ideas? Do your players understand what you expect of them?
- 6. An effective use of mental rehearsal.**
Do you visualize the process and desired outcome of your task? Do your players understand how to practice visualization for success?
- 7. Little need of outside praise or recognition.**
You must have an internal feeling of accomplishment. Are you driven by attitude, motivation rather than fear or reward?
- 8. A superior ability to take risks.**
Are you willing to break out of the comfort zone? Do you welcome new challenges?
- 9. The ability to accept feedback and to self-correct.**
Are you able to use information from respected sources to improve? Do you attend clinics and conferences for personal improvement?
- 10. A willingness to accept ownership of creative ideas.**
Are you willing to "go for it" and initiate action on your ideas? Do you take the time to study your opponent and make proper adjustments to counter their strengths?

..... Suggestions for Personal Motivation

- A. Identify one of your biggest strengths. This is an area that you have ranked as a five. Build on this strength to help you develop to your full potential.
- B. Pick an area that you have ranked one or two and make a commitment to show maximum improvement within the next several months. Actually develop a written plan to build this weakness into a strength.
- C. Accept personal responsibility for your strengths and weaknesses, and develop a plan to deal with each. Pick out the key factors that have the greatest impact on your profession and build up these areas first.

Maintaining Personal Motivation

During a down year it is difficult to stay “Fired Up.”

Consider these time-tested tips:

1. **Invest in yourself.** Pay the price for self-improvement. Make it a point to take classes, attend workshops and do professional reading.
2. **Believe in yourself and your ability to improve.** Make sure you realize the value of your profession and see yourself as being essential to the success of your organization.
3. **Establish goals** in all areas of your life and develop a plan for reaching them.
4. **Make a list of your five most important current wants or desires.** Next to each put down what benefit or payoff you expect from each.
5. **Concentrate on the benefits of reaching your goals.** Use the powerful goal of visualization to see yourself accomplishing your goals.
6. **Always use positive, affirmative language** as you communicate with others and in your self-talk. Replace the word “can’t” with “can”, and “try” with “will” in your daily vocabulary.
7. **Surround yourself with personal and professional winners.**
8. **Keep your problems in proper perspective.** Break them down into small manageable parts so they will be easier to handle.
9. **Know where you stand.** Do a self-evaluation to determine your strengths and weaknesses. Celebrate your successes, minimize your weaknesses and maximize your strengths.
10. **Put yourself in other people’s shoes.** How do you see yourself from their perspective?
11. **View criticism as a learning experience.** If your belief is weak, your reaction to criticism will be emotional or irrational. Have a plan to deal with criticism and consider the source.
12. **Develop a “constructive discontent” with the way things are.** Use your imagination to come up with a plan for improvement.
13. **Get into the habit of avoiding procrastination** and develop a “do it now” mentality.
14. **Remember the lessons of history.** The greatest people in history are those who failed most often. Persistence often turns adversity into greatness. It is not how seldom you fail in life that counts, it’s how often you rise after a setback.
15. **Learn to stay relaxed and receptive to new ideas.** Always be in control of your emotions.
16. **Minimize the amount of time you spend watching television.** It can be a huge time waster.
17. **Constantly work to improve your communication skills.** Speak with confidence and emphasize critical points by varying your voice and using proper gestures. Make an effort to be an active listener.
18. **Walk with an animated stride and convey confidence in the way you carry yourself.**
19. **Analyze people of achievement** and learn from the way they handle themselves and how they deal with various situations.

The Mental Game:

Training Your Mind for Peak Performance

To maximize your performance in any activity it is important to win the mental game. Rank yourself from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in each of the qualities below to determine your strengths and areas for improvement.

_____ **1. Peak Performers Set Goals.** They have the ability to break their dreams down into small manageable parts and are able to work on them on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. Peak performers have precise objectives in mind and always keep their eyes on the prize.

_____ **2. Peak Performers Practice Mental Rehearsal.** Mental rehearsal is often called the “master skill” because the development of many other skills depends on the ability of the individual to picture being successful at the desired task. Mental rehearsal means focusing on a goal to the point where the individual actually practices the activity in his or her mind. Research has determined the mind does not distinguish between real and imagined experiences.

_____ **3. Peak Performers Practice With A Purpose.** Every practice session is viewed as an opportunity for personal improvement. Peak performers truly believe positive preparation and practice means perfect performance. They always practice with a purpose and never just to get it over.

_____ **4. Peak Performers Strive For Excellence.** They believe they are capable of bettering their previous performance. Peak performers are capable of evaluating their accomplishments and determining how they can improve. As they push themselves to new levels they have the ability to relax and stay “in the zone.”

_____ **5. Peak Performers Are Confident.** They have the ability to rise above fear, worry, doubt and anger, and concentrate on controlling the emotions that will help them accomplish their task. They thrive on pressure situations because through the practice of mental rehearsal they have been there before.

_____ **6. Peak Performers Take Educated Risks.** This means they are not being foolhardy or reckless, but accept the challenge and possibility of failure that is necessary for achievement to take place. They focus on success and know that in order to rise to their full potential, perseverance is essential.

_____ **7. Peak Performers Are Team Players.** They are unselfish in team situations and are willing to play a lesser role to bring out the best in the team. When working with others, peak performers demand the same type of commitment from team members and will encourage others to elevate their level of achievement. In the ideal team setting peak performers give support to others and receive it themselves.

_____ **8. Peak Performers Focus On The Present.** Whether in sports, music or drama they have the ability to learn from, but rise above past mistakes and concentrate on the task at hand. While they tend to be perfectionists they are tolerant of error to the point where they will not allow previous flaws or setbacks to hinder future performance.

_____ **9. Peak Performers Are Positive Thinkers.** They see what can be done and communicate in a manner that conveys belief. Peak Performers understand that thoughts control feelings, feelings control

actions and actions become habits that influence attitudes and determine behavior. True believers control their minds to think constructive thoughts and visualize success.

_____ **10. Peak Performers Have Little Need For Outside Praise Or Recognition.** Since they are internally motivated and driven by the desire to excel, peak performers often give credit to others. Of course they appreciate a pat on the back, but they derive a great deal of satisfaction and fulfillment from their accomplishments

Selling Yourself and Your Sport

Basic Premise: Whether you are selling real estate, transportation, insurance, teaching a class or coaching football, first you must convince the prospect you are trustworthy and committed to doing what is best for them. They don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care. Consider these tips for success.

1. **It's your attitude that makes the difference.** Attitude is everything. When you are enjoying yourself, the players can sense it. Great attitudes are contagious; make sure yours is worth catching. Emerson said, *"Who you are speaks so loudly, I cannot hear what you say."*
2. **Personal motivation is a must.** You must have an intense burning desire to constantly improve your drive and determination. Learning as much as possible about your athletes and how you may help them benefit will increase your level of belief. Belief in your product helps maximize the faith you have in yourself.
3. **Self-Confidence is a given.** When you control your feelings and utilize attitude motivation, the end result is self-confidence. Confidence gives you the energy necessary to take on challenging tasks. When you successfully complete a demanding mission you experience personal growth.
4. **Have a deep down desire to succeed.** Internal motivation to be the best you can be will assist you in developing the courage necessary to overcome obstacles and take advantage of opportunities. Use the powerful tool of visualization to see yourself being successful. *"All our dreams can come true – if we have the courage to pursue them."* Walt Disney
5. **Persistence is a valuable characteristic.** Have a plan to deal with criticism and rejection. Understand that rejection may mean correction, and that follow-up is critical to reaching some prospects. Have that attitude Susan B. Anthony had when she said, *"Failure is impossible."*
6. **Do Your Follow-up.** Develop a master list of future players and determine the best approach to use for each. Keep thorough records and read your latest entries so you know what you need to do next.
7. **Know your product.** Make an effort to continually work on building your knowledge base. Classes, workshops, clinics, and reading about your sport will enhance your degree of belief.
8. **Be a goal setter.** Goals give direction to our dreams. Ben Franklin said, *"Going through life without a goal is like shooting without a target."* Short range, intermediate, and long-range goals are essential for success.
9. **Maintain a professional appearance.** Look sharp, be prepared, and get a good night's sleep. When you are interacting with, and serving people, it is essential to have unbounded energy and go the extra mile. You have only one opportunity to make a good first impression.
10. **Master the art of sales.** Study various approaches on how to reach diverse people. Know that

individuals will comprehend facts and statistics differently. Utilize a wide variety of methods to communicate.

11. **Empathize with the player.** Put yourself in the other person's shoes. How do you like to be treated? The ability to identify with the thoughts and feelings of others is essential.
12. **Have fun!** Enjoy interacting with people and providing them with the education and service vital to improving the quality of their lives. Always remember Henry Ford's statement, *"Failure is only the opportunity to begin again more intelligently."*

Extracurricular Activities: A Valuable Educational Experience

Participation in extracurricular activities provides the student with the opportunity to develop to their full potential in their relationships with others. Society values workers with interpersonal skills and problem solving ability. Positive participation in school activities enhances many desirable personal characteristics that may be utilized later in life.

1. **Teamwork** – The ability to work with others is extremely important in modern society.
2. **Commitment** – Players must be at all practices and follow all team rules.
3. **Work Ethic** – Physical conditioning can only be attained through hard work.
4. **Pride in Performance** – A feeling of accomplishment is realized through positive application of effort.
5. **Friendships** – Lifetime relationships are developed through participation in sports.
6. **Achievement** – Players represent their communities, schools, and families. A feeling of togetherness is experienced.
7. **Enthusiasm** – In order to be successful, both school activities and life must be approached with enthusiasm.
8. **Goal Setting** – Any well-structured organization has goals and a plan to reach those goals. Students learn how to set goals and how to devise a plan to achieve them.
9. **Persistence** – A person learns to get up and go again after getting knocked down.
10. **Confidence** – Self-esteem is enhanced through a series of achievements.
11. **Speaking Ability** – The skills necessary for one activity often apply to others.
12. **Have Fun** – School activities are fun for the participant and exciting to watch.
13. **Identity** – The team or organization provides all participants with a sense of belonging.
14. **Courage** – Performance under pressure helps conquer fear.
15. **Challenges** – Participants learn how to overcome obstacles to success.
16. **Academic Achievement** – Numerous studies indicate students who are active in school activities perform better in the classroom.

17. **Responsibility** – School activities hold students accountable for their actions.
18. **Success in Life** – According to the American College Testing Service, participation in school activities is the number one indicator of success later in life.

Sportsmanship for the Coach and the Player

Sportsmanship: The conduct of one participating in a sport. This includes: fairness, respect for your teammates, coaches, officials, opponents, and yourself, and graciousness in winning or losing.

1. **Always keep a positive attitude.** Believe in your coach, believe in yourself and believe in your teammates. Belief comes from hard work, practicing with a purpose and making good decisions in your life. *"Ability may get you to the top, but it takes character to keep you there."* **John Wooden**
2. **Communicate in a positive manner.** Explain what should be done, never how not to do it. Studies indicate a person is encouraged to act by his dominant thoughts. Coach by creating a vivid picture of the best way to accomplish the task. Most often yelling or screaming results in a breakdown in communication. There is no place for sarcasm or humiliation in sports.
3. **Coach and play by the rules and in the spirit of the game.** All sports have a specific code of rules to follow. Finding ways to circumvent the intent of the rule results in confusion and unethical play. Example: Intentional teaching of holding in football is wrong and may lead to a distorted interpretation of how to play the game and affect how future decisions are made.
4. **Coaching is teaching.** Explain, check for understanding, drill and practice through repetition. These are all essential for success. The player and coach must remain patient and realize each learns in a specific manner. Encourage teammates and believe in your ability to perform the task.
--"I don't know that there are any shortcuts to doing a good job." **Sandra Day O'Connor**
5. **Mutual respect is essential.** All coaches and players want the team to be successful. A wide variety of individuals comprise the team. Be aware of different personalities and relate to each person with concern for what is best for them and the team. Players must realize they don't have to "like the coach" to be a good team player.

--"The harder you work, the harder it is to surrender." **Vince Lombardi**

6. **Be a good role model.** Coach who you are first and then what you know. Always be on time and prepared for every practice. Players are expected to make good decisions with regard to training rules and following team expectations.
7. **Do everything with class.** Conduct yourself in a manner that brings credit to the team. Following the game, give credit to your opponent and maintain your self-control. There is no place for "trash-talking," demeaning gestures, yelling out of the bus or behaving in a manner that could discredit your opponent. Remember the Golden Rule – treat your opponents the way you would like to be treated.

--"Being a great athlete is important to me, but it's more important to be a great person."
Jackie Joyner Kersee

8. **Be the best TEAM player you can be.** Whether you are a starter or reserve, always

practice to get better and see yourself as a valuable member of the team. Coaches must make decisions based on performance, but a hustling, hardworking player will get the coaches attention. Play an important role in every practice and expect to play in every game.

--"Every player must put the team first—ahead of personal glory." **Paul "Bear" Bryant**

9. **Team performance is more important than personal records.** Once a game has been decided leaving the "star" in to build stats or break a record is unfair to the rest of the team and shows disregard for the opponent.
10. **Respect the officials.** Concentrate on the game and your performance. The officials will do their best to see that the game is played within the rules. If you must speak with an official, address them with respect. It shows a lot of class when both coaches recognize a job well done.

Do You and Your Players Practice Good Sportsmanship?

Instructions: Respond to each item by placing an (X) in the space that best expresses how the statement describes you. If the statement is not like you at all, check space one. If it fits perfectly, check space five. The spaces in between allow you to indicate various degrees of fit. If you are torn between feeling it does or does not apply, check space three.

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Play By The Rules – I always follow all the rules.					
2	Respect The Officials – I concentrate on my play and demonstrate respect for the officials.					
3	Communicate In A Positive Manner – I am upbeat and optimistic when communicating with my teammates and coaches.					
4	Practice Self-Control – I keep my emotions under control and focus on my performance.					
5	Be A Positive Role Model – I set an excellent example for others to follow.					
6	Make Positive Comments – I stay away from trash talk and never provoke opponents.					
7	Admit Your Mistakes – I take personal responsibility for my play and never make excuses.					
8	Be A Team Player – I value the success of the team ahead of individual praise and recognition.					
9	Always Give 100% - I play with pride and make a commitment to do my best at all times.					
10	Credit The Opponent – Win or lose I give credit to the opponent after a tough game.					
11	Play With Class – I concentrate on properly executing the fundamentals of the game and refrain from showing off.					
12	Maintain A High Degree Of Integrity - I take pride in being truthful and in keeping my word.					
13	Follow All Training Rules – I exercise self-control and make good decisions in my personal life.					

14	Have Fun – I enjoy the spirit of competition and interacting with my teammates.					
Total Score						

Scoring: Add up your total points to determine your level of sportsmanship.

- **60 – 70 Outstanding sportsmanship. Keep being a positive leader on your team**
- **50 – 59 An impressive score! You possess the key characteristics of good sportsmanship.**
- **40 – 49 Improve in several categories and you will have excellent sportsmanship skills.**
- **30 – 39 Much potential exists. Keep working on a self-improvement plan.**
- **Below 29 – It is up to you to alter your attitude and lifestyle to develop better sportsmanship.**

Seventeen Ways to Promote Good Sportsmanship in Your School

Tips for fans, players, parents, and school personnel

1. **Be a positive role model for others.** Follow all rules and treat opponents, coaches, officials, and yourself with respect.
2. **Remember the golden rule.** Treat others the way you like to be treated.
3. **List positive expectations** for fans in the game program. Publicize these in the local newspaper and school newsletter.
4. **Use the P. A. system to remind spectators of positive expectations** before and during the course of the contest.
5. **Athletes in one sport can show their support for participants in other sports.** For example: Members of the football team can cheer on the cross-country runners.
6. **Display messages advocating good sportsmanship** in school, the gym, and playing fields.
7. **Schools and conferences can develop programs** to recognize individuals and schools for practicing good sportsmanship.
8. **Game officials may be encouraged by the conference and WIAA to provide positive feedback** to schools when teams demonstrate admirable sportsmanship.
9. **Coaches should hold pre-season meetings with players and parents** to explain positive expectations during the season and at games.
10. **School assemblies and/or classroom meetings** where proper behavior and sportsmanship are explained, ensure that all students receive the same constructive message.
11. **Follow the guidelines provided by the WIAA** to encourage appropriate conduct on and off the field.
12. **The activities director must meet with the coaching staff** to guarantee that all coaches deliver the same affirmative message to their teams.
13. **It is imperative that school personnel, who are identified by distinctive apparel, properly supervise every school event.**
14. **Coaches are obligated to model and teach** acceptable pre and post game behavior in addition to conduct during the contest.
15. **Place a premium on performing to the best of your ability.** Take pride in teamwork, listening to the coach, and accepting the official's decisions without complaint.
16. **Acknowledge victories without humiliating opponents.** Inappropriate cheers and chants, running sprints, singing the school song in front of the opponent, etc. can be demeaning to the other team.
17. **Have logical consequences.** Be proactive to prevent problems from developing, but have a carefully thought out plan in place to invoke when poor sportsmanship is displayed.

Sixteen Tips for Positive Parenting in Extracurricular Activities

1. **Be positive with your athlete.** Let them know you are proud they are part of the team.
*Focus on the benefits of teamwork and personal discipline.
2. **Encourage your athlete to follow all training rules.** Help the coaches build a team commitment.
*Set a good example in your personal lifestyle.
3. **Allow your athlete to perform and progress at a level consistent with his ability.**
*Athletes mature at different ages; some are more gifted than others.
4. **Always support the coaching staff when controversial decisions are made.**
*The coaches need your backing to keep good morale on the team.
5. **Insist on positive behavior in school and a high level of performance in the classroom.**
*Numerous studies indicate extracurricular involvement helps enhance academic performance.
6. **Stay calm in injury situations.**
*Parents can help minimize the trauma by being in control and offering comfort.
7. **Cheer for our team and players. Opponents and referees deserve respect.**
*Realize that high school players will make mistakes. Your support is needed during tough times.
8. **Promote having fun and being a team player. Very few high school athletes receive scholarships.**
*Concentrate on what is best for the team. Preoccupation with statistics can be very distracting.
9. **An athlete's self-confidence and self-image will be improved by support at home. Comparison to others is discouraged.**
*Encourage the athletes to do their best regardless of the performance of their brothers or sisters.
10. **Winning is fun, but building positive team values is most important.**
*The concept of working together to perform a task will have lasting benefits. Winning takes place when all the little things are done correctly.
11. **Find the time to be an avid booster of school activities.**
*Help build a solid support system for coaches and athletes.

12. **Help students keep jobs and cars in proper perspective.**
*Materialistic values can detract from the commitment to the team. Teenagers should have the opportunity to take advantage of extracurricular activities.
13. **Athletes must attend all practices and contests.**
*Stress the necessity to make a commitment to the team. Practice is important.
14. **Emphasize the importance of well-balanced meals and regular sleep patterns.**
*An athlete plays best when care is taken to consume nutritious food and obtain sufficient rest.
15. **Many athletes enjoy participating in several sports.**
*Specialization in one sport may prevent an athlete from enjoying great team relationships.
16. **Persistence and being able to accept a role are extremely important for the team to be successful.**
*Not everyone will be a starter, but everyone is important to the team. Some players may not develop until their senior season. Encourage them to be persistent.

