

NATIONAL COACHING INSTITUTE

Task 17

(Leadership)

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Philosophy of Leadership

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COACHING PHILOSOPHY

MISSION STATEMENT

To become an expert coach who:

- Motivates student-athletes to come together as a team and achieve their potential as basketball players and people.
- Continues to learn and develop himself, modelling personal improvement for his basketball teams.

CORE VALUES

It is not 'my team' because it belongs to the players. I am a coach who:

- 1) helps the team determine appropriate, meaningful goals;
- 2) works as hard as I can to help the team achieve its goals.

Players must believe in the team's goals. They have input in the direction of the team, but once that path is chosen, I expect each player to give their best to the team.

CHOICES

We always face choices. Like in life, players must come to their own decision and accept the consequences. Freedom to make informed decisions plays an important role in the development of analytical thinking among young people.

COMMITMENT

Since we are a team, it is paramount that we communicate and trust each other. But being a team doesn't stop after practice. It's a twenty four hour per day commitment to support and motivate each other.

If I demand something from the team, it is important that I model that behaviour personally. I am always available to help players outside of games and practices. Providing academic and personal counselling, in addition off-season individual and team workouts, is part of my commitment to the players.

FLEXIBILITY

It would be stubborn, short-sighted, and ultimately unsuccessful for me to insist that players adapt to rigid systems and arbitrary rules not suited to their skills. I have always adapted my tactics and strategies to create advantages based on our strengths.

WORK ETHIC

I never want to stop improving as a coach. I don't seek to imitate a particular coach, but I am always willing to learn about new coaching methods and incorporate different perspectives into my coaching. Reading, clinics, mentors, and continual learning are all part of giving players the technical knowledge they deserve.

PERSONAL BESTS

In the end, the field, career, discipline, project - whatever - can be set aside. The goal isn't to coach a basketball team, design a jet engine, assemble a barbecue, or provide technical analysis to institutional investors; it's to develop oneself. Self-actualization is highly transferable; one could try anything for the first time and set a personal best.

Introspection is more critical than any external judgments, real or imagined, and if one's personal bests do not meet their own standards, you have a problem. These internal conflicts are always sticky and do not lead to an easy resolution. If the profession that one identifies strongly with does not fulfill one's self-actualization needs, where does one turn? Does one try again or shift gears?

When one coaches, the aim is to develop a group of people so that the group continually improves. Some days there will be a step back but the hope is that the prevailing trend demonstrates progress. The coaching staff is part of the group that is constantly in flux, striving to achieve their goals.

Life - and one's life work - is a touchy subject. Like occasional failures, conflict is a byproduct of the risk taking that is necessary to succeed and must be tolerated. The problem is not the conflict; the problem is the actual issue that causes the conflict, which all the stakeholders want to correct.

On the court, one aims to play hard, play smart, and play together. These three objectives are actions that can be controlled. The goal, which closely parallels life, is to set a personal best each and every game, practice, or workout. At times, when one of these behaviours is not performed correctly or a conflict arises, a change is required. One shouldn't begrudge the commission of the first mistake but act to eliminate its repetition.

All of this is independent of the sport. Any endeavour can be distilled into fundamental, essential skills. Excellence of execution determines success, relative to one's first attempt and one's potential to improve. The season is a timeframe, but it is not the end of the line. When one is truly committed to their goals, they cease working on the task at hand and begin to develop themselves. Throughout life, goals evolve; one's achievement and success remain.

INTEGRITY AND LEADERSHIP

Integrity is integral to a play: every player, coach, and staff member must say what they mean, do what they said they would, and acknowledge what they have done. Trust is a cornerstone of all team standards, the foundation of great success.

It is not a matter of morality. (Nevertheless, all teams should not only follow what defines ethical behavior in their respective societies but go above and beyond in order to set the example.) Integrity is not synonymous with judging between right and wrong (Christensen, Fall 2009, p. 16). Camus a dit que «l'honnêteté n'a pas besoin de règles» (Camus, 2004, p. 96). Integrity doesn't need rules, only consistency.

Participation on a team is a promise to multiple individuals:

PLAYERS PROMISE...

- **to teammates:** "I will be there for you when you need me. I will follow the standards that we agreed to. I will always be honest with you."
- **to coaches:** "I will always be open with you. I will do what I say I will."
- **to themselves:** "I will keep my words. I will self-evaluate myself sincerely after each performance. I will be at peace with myself."

COACHES PROMISE...

- **to players:** "I will be clear and direct with you. I will set my expectations at the beginning of the year and be true to them. All decisions will be transparent."
- **to all team members:** "I will treat everyone fairly and consistently. I will hold everyone accountable to what they say."
- **to recruits:** "I will not guarantee anything beyond a fair opportunity and make no enticements."
- **to the community:** "When a member of the team that I am coaching says something, you can rely on it."
- **to themselves:** "I will keep to the timelines to which I agreed. I will not ask anyone to do anything that I would not feel comfortable doing myself. I will self-evaluate myself continually and sincerely."

John Wooden placed integrity near the top of his Pyramid of Success. Coach Wooden would say: "Make your 'yes' mean yes and your 'no' mean no." Even the bench players on his team, who may have been frustrated by their lack of court time respected his principles. Andy Hill was one such player and he feels that this clarity allowed the U.C.L.A. teams to function better because everyone understood their role and importance to the team (Hill & Wooden, 2001, pp. 88-90).

Integrity is not an outdated idea. Mike Krzyzewski feels that it leads to positive results on the court and positive feelings away from it. To him, it is bad to let others down but it is even worse to let oneself down. Coach Krzyzewski believes that anyone can recover

from a bad game or a mistake but that it takes much longer to recover from a lapse of integrity (Krzyzewski, 2006, pp. 97-8).

The 2008 Redeem Team won an Olympic Gold Medal, in good part because they made a commitment to their country and each other. Players and coaches created a set of standards and every team member held each other accountable (Krzyzewski, 2009, pp. 67-84).

“The Celtic Way” defined the National Basketball Association in the 1960s as Boston won eleven out of thirteen championships and modeled the way on and off the court. Despite his influence, “The Celtic Way” did not mean that Red Auerbach managed the team like a tyrant or that he was not open to suggestions from the players. Auerbach was committed to winning and he believed that the best way to achieve this goal was to treat everyone consistently, irrespective of their race or previous role on the team.

The coach would say: “I never believed in handling players. You handle animals. I treated my players like people. I respected their intelligence. I was straight with them and they were straight with me. I didn’t lie to them and they didn’t lie to me. There was no double standard” (Whalen, 2005, p. 20).

Bill Russell, who followed him as coach of the team took integrity to an extreme. Russell would say that “a man without integrity, belief or self-respect is not a man. And a man who won’t express his convictions has no convictions” (Whalen, 2005, p. 52).

If a team member senses that any relationship is dishonest, it may lead to lower satisfaction or even reduced performance from peak performers. If a person is dishonest with themselves or others, they can suffer stress along with impaired performance. There is a risk that the dishonest behavior - or the subsequent sentiments of guilt or depression - will contaminate other team members, especially those in the social network of the player or coach who has been dishonest (Messick & Tenbrunsel, 1996, p. 55).

Designing simple team standards of integrity at the beginning of the season and enforcing accountability throughout the season is one of the best methods for a coach to avoid this guilt among team members.

The final step is convincing all team members of the importance of integrity. The coach could simply recruit like-minded personnel but that may dilute the talent level and impede creativity. So at some point, the coach must solicit buy-in from all stake holders.

As a rationalist and believer in Occam’s Razor, I prefer a simple intellectual approach. Integrity is important to team success but it is even more important to one’s character. Even a single lapse can cause lasting damage. Adolescents have high social needs so some players may be susceptible to peer pressure. Others may be open to an appeal to emotion or have high needs for a trusting and safe environment. This is when the coach must lead.

Maintaining integrity consistently is one of the most difficult tasks that a human can undertake. But it is essential for success in sport, or any other team endeavour.

CREATIVITY AND LEADERSHIP

My friend Andy Higgins explains that part of his motivation for coaching is to expand what is possible. Problem solving, breaking down boundaries, and thinking outside the box are all methods to expand what is possible. Historically, basketball - and all sports - has always been fueled by creativity.

YESTERDAY

PROBLEM SOLVING

James Naismith created the sport to provide a sport based on skill that could be played indoors. In the early part of the twentieth century, teams like the Original Celtics and the New York Renaissance developed offensive and defensive systems to achieve tremendous winning streaks.

BREAKING DOWN BOUNDARIES

Innovation flourished on the concrete too; Earl “The Goat” Manigault was as legendary in Rucker Park as Earl “The Pearl” Monroe was in Madison Square Garden. Driving, shooting, passing, and dunking, their groundbreaking moves opened up the game.

THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

When Dean Smith was first building the North Carolina Tarheels, the shot-clock had not yet been adopted. Faced with mediocre talent but excellent ballhandlers such as Phil Ford, he conceived the Four Corners offence to preserve a lead (or even mount a comeback) late in games.

TODAY

Those who have solved problems by looking at them from a different perspective have benefited from successful seasons while others have remained stuck in the mud. For example, The Detroit Pistons have a great team but it is hardly built on a foundation of great players. In order to win, the team has made defensive intensity their identity.

The Argentina National Team plays a flowing, offensive game based on movement to maximize the talents of their skilled perimeter players, like Manu Ginobili. There are countless ways to defend screen and rolls plays or double team and surprise inventions can be very effective.

THE ROLE OF COACHES

All of the above coaches used creative thinking to design a new solution to their obstacles and won by changing the conditions under which they were operating. The players

bought into the process and executed without fearing failure. After the initial success, the teams continued to improve themselves, employing creativity to stay ahead of the pack.

Nurturing and inspiring the creative process is essential to develop the problem-solving abilities of student-athletes, on and off the court. It is a skill that does not come naturally but a coach can undertake a few critical steps to help all team members improve their ability to create:

FOSTER A CREATIVE ENVIRONMENT

The coaching staff should value and model creativity. Show players how a play can be tweaked to open their minds to new possibilities. Recognize creative efforts, even if they end in failure.

Value creative team members and use them to better the team. In Game 5 of the 1970 N.B.A. Finals, the New York Knicks lost centre Willis Reed to injury. Needing to stop Wilt Chamberlain at both ends of the court, Bill Bradley suggested a 1-3-1 offensive set with the small forward in the in high post. The Knicks won the game but coach Red Holzman said that it would have been worthwhile to try nevertheless in order to show the team that he valued their input.

One may argue that a coach employing this approach abdicates a duty they have to their team. It is definitely a stark contrast to the coach who micro-manages all that falls within their fiefdom. In that case, when a team's efforts are directed towards something that falls within the coach's Ideal Quality World, where do the athletes find significance?

CHALLENGE THE STATUS QUO

Roger Martin suggests that a key element to a creative environment is eliminating the fear of failure: players shouldn't "trade-off" experimenting, on the chance that they will be blamed if it fails, for taking the safe route and settling for less (Martin & Austen, 2002, p. 9).

School administration and the athletics department should also support innovation. In the long term, it will improve the experience of students throughout the school. In the short term, they should tolerate bumps in the road. The point of education is self-improvement, one of the most difficult tasks in the world.

UNDERSTAND DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

Managing designers is a challenge because they usually have separate mindsets. But like coaches and athletic directors, leaders and designers have many of the same common goals so it is important to put effort into maintaining the relationship when there are differences in opinions.

TEACH STUDENT-ATHLETES HOW TO THINK

First of all, coaches need to teach themselves how to think creatively. Keeping a coaching journal can help organize all sorts of ideas (good, bad, half-baked, exceptional). Fooling around with different plays and systems stimulates special visualization.

Secondly, coaches can pass these skills on to players. Mental sets, different drills, or stopping practice for a detailed explanation are all excellent opportunities to communicate creativity to the team. When someone makes a suggestion, their idea should be respected and considered honestly.

SELL INNOVATION

Coaches need to get buy-in from their players. Malcolm Gladwell believes you need to identify the connectors, mavens, and salespeople for any idea to truly take hold (Gladwell, 2000, p. 67). In a small setting like a basketball team, the coach is the ultimate salesperson and team members fill Gladwell's roles. The thoughtful coach will identify them and make them part of the process.

EXECUTE

Communicate what needs to be done and do it. When the game starts, creativity yields to performance on demand, under stress. When a crisis occurs during the year, the players are ultimately responsible for the resolution. Coaches can recommend actions but players must execute these actions. Sometimes, the players must pull themselves together and move forward on their own.

TOMORROW

EVALUATE, ADJUST, AND IMPROVE

The process of innovation never stops. It's not necessary to go back to the drawing board to get new ideas. Many successes in basketball have come from adjustments to winning ideas. Seven-game series are won by adjustments. Many teams have gone small, such as when the Lakers started Magic Johnson at the Centre position in the 1980 Finals.

Realistic self-reflection is a skill that is going out of style. Players need to assess their performance in order to improve. If coaches or leaders do not evolve, their organization is faces a dire predicament.

Pablo Picasso said that: "All children are artists. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up." Selfishly, coaches should nurture innovators because they can truly drive a team at times. Altruistically, coaches should nurture innovators because the economy will need a lot more free-thinking ideas to flourish in the twenty-first century, among other reasons.

BEING NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI AND OTHER EFFECTIVE WAYS TO COMMUNICATE AND LEAD

Over human history, many complex problems have been solved by combining art, science, and creativity. Many great thinkers unraveled a number of puzzles coaches face on a daily basis.

Though their portraits may fade and the pages of their works turn yellow, these philosophers, economists, adventurers, and thinkers have plenty to offer. Coaches should keep an open mind; there are plenty of resources to help them lead and deal with new situations that occur. These six thinkers have a similar outlook, based on their stoicism and belief that it is the individual who must make anything happen.

NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI

“Minds are of three kinds. One is capable of thinking for itself, another is able to understand the thinking of others, and a third can neither think for itself nor understand the thinking of others.”

- Niccolò Machiavelli

Machiavelli always argued that the only qualification for a position of power was holding said position. Coaches find themselves in a role where they must not only manage players during games but guide them so they can make good decisions when not with the team. That requires an understanding of how people operate and the willingness to carry out whatever actions are necessary.

The ideal ruler should be a person of *virtù*, capable of varying their conduct as the circumstances dictate. Every situation is different and should be handled differently (“as the winds of fortune and circumstances constrain”). *Fortuna* is another concept described in The Prince: an unexpected event that can be managed if anticipated but very destructive if not managed swiftly. A coach cannot prepare for every situation that may occur on or off the court but they can establish a consistent framework for problems with players, teachers, parents, or spectators.

Machiavelli echoed the view that humans only comply with rules because of consequences or fear of consequences. A coach need not constantly punish players but must at least create the perception that all team members are accountable for their actions. Young people are finding themselves and may not develop responsibility independently. Choices made initially because of potential consequences will eventually become good habits.

Setting high standards at the beginning of the year will create a first-impression bias but without damaging the team environment. Players will be caught up in the enthusiasm of the new season and will not mind facing penalties. Afterwards, the rules can be relaxed slightly to handle very unique situations.

If it becomes necessary to implement several negative actions, several decisions can be made in a short period of time. The combined effect will be less than had the penalties been distributed over the course of several weeks or months. A coach can also maintain the positive sentiment for the beginning of the year by stringing out rewards through the season.

Overall, a basketball season should be a positive event. Coaches (for the sake of the players and for their own personal stress levels) should emphasize the value of the “happening” - in addition to the value of the “act” (wins and losses). Machiavelli believed that this nebulous feeling of being alive and coming together was an enjoyable part of life.

No appropriate (or effective) decision can be made with understanding the players and how they think. It's possible that there might be significant conflict when a coach attempts to change the philosophy of a young person. Such a process should not be initiated without a good comprehension of where the student-athlete is at the moment, breaking a long development process into smaller goals.

JOHN NASH

Nash equilibrium can predict the reactions of certain players in critical situations. When working with young people, coaches may find Machiavelli's quote about three types of people to be accurate. Anecdotal evidence can be combined with a science like economics; each of the three types of personalities might react in two or three ways to a given event.

If games are an extension of self and young players are developing their personality for the first time, an individual game such as basketball could lead to greater selfishness or poor decisions.

Coaches must recognize the make-up of their players and use game theory to predict their reactions. They could gage the players' reactions and spend more time analyzing exactly what it means. Coaching skill lies in knowing what buttons to press with each player in order to develop quality and force it to rise to the top.

“What truly is logic? Who decides reason? It is only in the mysterious equations of love that any logic or reason can be found.”

- John Nash

MARCUS AURELIUS

Marcus Aurelius was a late stoic philosopher who believed in suppressing many of his emotions with logic. Stoicism implies that there is a rational force that organizes the universe, which is divided into the active and the passive. The active fulfils the role of Fate but the passive is matter that lies ready for use by anyone. If a coach or player do not take initiative, the team will miss many opportunities for improvement.

As clutch hitting statistics show, there really is no such thing as clutch hitting, or “lucky” and “unlucky”. Teaching student-athletes to make informed choices during training

sessions, practices, and classes leads to informed choices during games. It is critical that players develop positive habits based on sound principals.

"You can react with indignation if you want but they will carry on without you."

- Marcus Aurelius

Coaches should teach players how to control themselves in the face of adverse circumstances, opponents, or spectators. As a friend once said to me in a timeout huddle, "only you can make yourself feel embarrassed." It's important to play with passion but the team should remain under control. Coaches should avoid provoking negative emotions like anger, fear, or embarrassment if possible.

PLATO

Plato often expressed an urge to leave the repugnance of typical human relations behind in order to focus on the purity of beautiful forms. One could say that coaches want to escape the minutiae of coaching in a school setting in order to focus on the joy of the game.

"Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle."

- Plato

It is true that student-athletes must deal with many issues during their high school years and tolerance is paramount. This absolutely does not entail enabling poor behaviour and lowering standards. Glaucon (one of Plato's speakers) states that men are only just because they fear the consequences of breaking the law. A coach must be prepared to enforce the penalties for misbehaviour; however he must do it the right way. Coaches must walk softly and carry a big stick.

When imposing team rules or decisions, school or coaching staff should be certain to elaborate upon their philosophy as much as possible. This makes players stakeholders in the decision and helps create buy-in. Making one-side decisions and relying upon extrinsic motivation can only carry a team so far; coaches should utilize collaboration so that players comprehend the how and the why as much as the what and generate their own intrinsic motivation.

In The Republic, Plato writes that justice in the soul consists in each part of the soul doing its own. So if each team member is honestly doing their best and improving themselves, the team is going to be in good shape. If a coach has also conveyed a strong definition of the term justice, using teachable moments, they will have fulfilled their job as a teacher as well.

ADAM SMITH

Adam Smith believed that reason is a slave to the passions (and rightfully so). Coaches should consider this when instructing teams, especially regarding behaviour off the court.

Teachers and coaches must not only impart the fundamentals of good decision making but also convince student-athletes why this course of action is correct.

Like Plato, Smith devoted extensive time to the discussion of how we determine what is good and what is bad. Coaches should know that they can never govern unilaterally and must always maintain sympathy and understanding for the players they instruct and evaluate.

Team building can also be improved by sympathy between team members. If everyone on the team acts conscientiously, an invisible hand will move the team towards its goals. Coaches model the way and help players discover their feelings of sympathy.

“Self-command is not only itself a great virtue, but from it all the other virtues seem to derive their principle luster.”

- Adam Smith

Bum Phillips once said that “self-discipline is the only discipline that lasts.” Coaches must motivate and support young people to control themselves and their emotions. Whether it is because of self-actualization needs or the enjoyment they can get from helping others, players need self-control to succeed on the court, in school, and in life.

T.E. LAWRENCE

Lawrence of Arabia helped guide an Arab revolt against the Turks in World War I. The premise of his operations was to start from the bottom and work upwards. By making local tribes stakeholders in the rebellion, he engendered greater participation that had Britain simply made alliances with the Arab leaders.

T.E. Lawrence believed that an Arab uprising against the Turks would suit Britain’s interest but knew that it would not succeed without according the local culture a fair amount of respect and freedom. Teams work best when coaches team members leeway to make some choices, backed up by consistent consequences.

Another sound principle was the recognition that every army is unique and every battle is different. Before committing to a plan of action, a coach should take the time to thoroughly understand the situation, whether it is by using statistics, video, or a distinctive perspective.

For example, the players we coach are not the same as us. Coaches picked up their technical and tactical knowledge over the course of many years; they should be understanding of players’ mistakes as they learn new concepts.

Lawrence realized that the onus for his self-actualization fell on his shoulders alone. He would not become wiser or more skilled by waiting; he had to make it happen.

“Nothing is written.”

- T.E. Lawrence

LEADERSHIP SELF-EVALUATION

THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-EVALUATION

Robert McNamara is one of my favourite twentieth century thinkers - because he experienced both extreme success during World War II and his time with the Ford Motor Company and brutal failure as Secretary of Defence for John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson. McNamara placed a great premium on personal reflection and learning from mistakes. After any endeavour, there is always something that can be improved.

I began coaching in 1997. I enrolled in the National Coaching Institute in 2004. I wanted to take a step back and assess how far I have come in that time.

ONE SMART WORLD RE-ASSESSMENT

In 2004, I completed a questionnaire to identify my abilities in four different leadership dimensions. The leadership diagnostic was designed by Bob Wiele and OneSmartWord (<http://www.onesmartworld.com/>) and is still available to all sorts of organizations. Thinking back, I know now that a low score in one area is not the end of the world and understand that the test is more a pie chart than a bar graph.

CREATIVITY: 39%

I did not understand this result at the time and still disagree to this date. In the classroom, on the basketball court, or in life, I have consistently shown an ability to think outside the box and generate new ideas. I think that I have addressed this low score by incorporating ideas from other sports, literature, and philosophy. One reason that I included the first two articles in this chapter is because I believe strongly in creativity.

As teachers and coaches, we must encourage creativity and enthusiasm among student-athletes. When they know that their ideas matter and they have the freedom to choose, their self-confidence grows.

Basketball was meant to be creative. Like art, there have been multiple leaders. The pioneers in the Midwest, the New York School (led by the Original Celtics and the New York Renaissance), the West Coast Fast Break, the American Basketball Association, the Jordan Consumer Era, and the European System (which is pushing new concepts of new play and player development to the forefront).

UNDERSTANDING: 47%

I rated highly for analyzing situations and poorly for doing likewise with people. I agree with this and improving this area has been my number one goal for the past two years. Showing empathy is hard; you can't enter the head of another so you must sense how

they are feeling based on experience and judgment. Being more compassionate was one of my goals for the summer of 2009

By debriefing players as they come off the court, providing one-on-one feedback in practice, making eye contact more frequently, connecting with each player every day, or contacting team members during the off-season, I feel that I have improved significantly. As a coach, I wish to be positive as much as possible. But, as Jay Triano said, being a nice guy is not a replacement for holding high standards and creating toughness within the team (Triano, 2009).

DECISION-MAKING: 58%

I received a good score for critical thinking and a lower value for decisions driven by values and intuition. This difference may be widened today. I plan thoroughly and go into each game, practice, and workout with a detailed strategy. Using statistics, especially unique statistics such as player chemistry and offensive efficiency, suits a philosophy of logic. As Aristotle said, "To say that that which is is not or that which is not is, is a falsehood; and to say that which is is and that which is not is not, is true."

PERSONAL SPIRIT: 81%

Oddly enough, I may be less concerned about this dimension. I have long-term goals for my career and I aim to achieve them but I will not be disappointed if my life takes a different turn and I accomplish something else instead. It is a sense of perspective, that there is more than one path in coaching and in life.

My sense of personal control remains and I think that it is one of my strengths. I try to control as many variables as possible and I believe that this benefits players because it allows me to create specific situations that similar to games during practices and workouts. In class, I also demand high standards, treating the classroom like a workplace in terms of punctuality, tolerance, and decorum.

IMPROVING MY WEAKNESSES

MANAGING AGRESSION

We often discuss how it seems that teenagers have a "fight or flight" mentality but there is a scientific basis to the argument. Under pressure, the brain releases hormones, such as adrenaline or noradrenaline, which can cause aggressiveness, increase feelings of fear, and inspire the body to perform faster, higher, or stronger.

All people, including athletes, need to manage these feelings. Teenagers at school or on the court may be sensing this stress for the first time. It is up to coaches to transform aggressiveness into confidence and fear and tension into increased focus. Some players need to be reminded of a comfort zone, such as the gym where they had fun as a child. Others need a combination of assurance and encouragement so that they channel their urge to defend their ego in a positive direction.

It may be necessary to put the sport or evaluation into perspective so fear of failure is not catastrophic. Mental sets at the beginning of class or practice can help a group of student-athletes develop their ability to focus or one-on-one discussions afterwards can give an individual the boost they need to get through the day. Or it may be necessary to simulate game conditions in practice and help players visualize a successful performance.

The ideal of Tachypsychia is very intriguing. During a competitive situation, the brain releases hormones which allow the person to perceive more information. This creates the impression that time has slowed down, a player can see gaps in the defence, or that the ball has entered the net a moment before it actually does. Inducing that feeling - and handling it in a calm manner - is a challenge for a coach (Clarkson, 1999, pp. 36-8).

Visualizing that a big game is just another pick-up game back home is similar to thinking that the audience for a big PowerPoint presentation is comprised of friends and family. Focusing intently on a foul shot and ignoring distractions is similar to excelling on a final exam. That is why I want to help others handle stress better.

If a coach can engender this sort of motivation, they can overcome a lack of relationship-building skill. An expert high performance coach can serve these players well, but they must want to be served.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Coaching is often described as relationship building, bringing people together. When two random squads play the team with superior talent, the players most physically and mentally ready to play, will win. Sometimes, the talent comes pre-packaged, hence the importance of recruiting and motivation in short-term scenarios.

When a coach possesses the luxury of time, what attributes become necessary? Does relationship-building remain paramount? When is it necessary to know the game and develop talent? Where do high standards fit in? A sophisticated project requires a sophisticated approach.

The Canadian National Soccer Team faced turmoil because certain key players were dismissed for reasons not germane to the pursuit of the World Cup. The players felt that they deserved a personal call from the Head Coach informing them of recent personnel moves; the coach felt that they shouldn't have spoken out. Consequently, Canada missed another World Cup (Bennett, 2008).

In a program, I think that it is important to develop talent. Players and coaches must improve continuously throughout the year. Student-athletes should take their responsibilities seriously and undertake the challenge of self-actualization; coaches should assign specific tasks to keep things simple and keep the team focused. Everyone should devise high standards and hold themselves to them, pushing each other to get better at game intensity. Relationships are founded on respect.

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Community Leadership

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INTRODUCTION

Andy Higgins, director of the National Coaching Institute (N.C.I.) - Ontario asked that each candidate interview a community leader. I arranged to interview Dr. Bruce Kidd, Dean of the Faculty of Physical Education and Health because of his involvement in collegiate athletics and his leadership role in the Canadian sport community.

ISSUES IN THE COMMUNITY

FOR CANADA

Funding in Canada for sport is paltry relative to other country. This shortcoming can be partly attributed to the lack of a dedicated ministry to direct sport from the level of elite athletics to lifetime fitness. The country-wide infrastructure deficit in all areas has also affected sport. Culturally, Canadians do not place as much importance on sport as other countries.

MINISTRY OF SPORT

During the 2008 election, all political parties agreed that it was appropriate to dedicate one percent of Canada's health spending to sport and fitness. This amounts to half of a billion dollars but currently the government is provided two hundred million dollars in funding.

Programs such as the National Coaching Institute, National Sport Organizations (N.S.O.), and Provincial Sport Organizations (P.S.O.) have raised the level of athletic knowledge across the county but Canada does not have a central sport and fitness centre to take leadership and guide new national policies. It is hoped that a cabinet minister for sport would increase the public profile of sport and fitness (Active Healthy Kids Canada, 2009, p. 135).

As part of the Department of Canadian Heritage, Sport Canada has three major goals: the Athlete Assistance Program to develop elite athletes, the Support Support Program for National and P.S.O.s, and the Hosting Program to hold major sporting events in Canada. Sport Canada's Special Initiatives include increasing participation across the country and introducing a Long-Term Athlete Development (L.T.A.D.) framework across Canada (Sport Canada, 2009).

INFRASTRUCTURE DEFICIT

In 1967, many sport facilities, especially arenas, were built as part of the country's centennial celebrations. Since that time, construction has slowed down immensely. Not many community facilities have been constructed in Toronto since amalgamation (Flaherty, 2009).

The 2009 Federal Budget created a five hundred million dollar fund to help erase the \$1.5 billion dollar deficit in sport and fitness infrastructure (Active Healthy Kids Canada, 2009, p. 135). This money will be available to municipalities, community organizations, First Nations communities, and other non-for-profit entities. The Recreational Infrastructure Canada (RInC) project is also meant to stimulate the local economy around these facilities (Flaherty, 2009).

PHYSICAL FITNESS

While the results are moving upwards, grades for youth fitness across Canada are still failing. Eighty-seven percent of children are not meeting the goal of ninety minutes of physical activity (Active Healthy Kids Canada, 2009, p. 23).

The Federal Government contribution to Special Olympics Canada increased to \$1.5 million for 2009-10. This amounts to about fifty dollars for each of the over thirty-one thousand disabled athletes who train with the organization (Flaherty, 2009) and the organization is compelled to raise more funds with significant fundraising.

When I spoke to Member of Parliament and Hall of Fame Goaltender Ken Dryden during the 2006 Liberal Leadership Convention, he felt that ParticipACTION was an excellent example of a simple program that had a tremendously positive result (Dryden, 2006).

The program has since been re-started as a Public-Private Partnership. It is not only a series of vignettes featuring Hal Johnson and Joanne MacLeod but an organization designed to raise awareness about fitness and inspire all Canadians - especially kids - to get active (ParticipACTION, 2009).

ELITE SPORT IN CANADA

Carded National Level athletes receive \$21,609,000 which amounts to sixty-four cents for every citizen in the country. It is the equivalent of spending \$10.91 for every active youth in the country on elite athletics (Sport Canada, 2009). Great Britain has contributed the equivalent of \$1,059,000,000 over six years on athlete development (Maki & Christie, 2008).

Consequently, sport maven Alex Baumann fears that new initiatives like Own the Podium, Road to Excellence, and Quest for Gold will only maintain or barely improve Canada's performance on the world stage. The Canadian Olympic Committee had been seeking greater corporate support to increase funding but key partners have dropped out due to economic difficulties. Others, such as General Motors and Petro Canada remain key contributors. Consequently, sports officials in Canada believe that they must emphasize sports with multiple medal chances, at the expense of more widespread support (Maki & Christie, 2008).

FOR ONTARIO

CARDED ATHLETES

Ontario Athletes receive \$5,699,000 from Sport Canada, comprising twenty-six percent of the amount distributed to carded athletes (Sport Canada, 2009), despite the fact that Ontarians comprise thirty-nine percent of Canada's population (Statistics Canada, 2009). 1,685 Canadian athletes receive funding from the Federal Government but less than a quarter are from Ontario (Sport Canada, 2009).

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Currently, the budget for Sport and Recreation in Ontario is \$23,516,100, with \$17,380,000 transferred to athletes or facilities and a little over six million dollars devoted to administrative costs (Ontario Provincial Government, 2005).

Nevertheless, there are other ways for athletes to receive money in Ontario:

- The Ontario Trillium Foundation is an agency of the Provincial Government which distributes one-hundred and twenty dollars to arts and culture, the environment, social services, and sport and recreation. Over 1,500 grants are made annually ranging from \$375,000 to \$1,250,000 (The Ontario Trillium Foundation, 2009).
- Ontario has been helping to keep pools in public schools open, devoting \$15.8 million over the next two years as part of a \$195 million commitment to improve and enhance community recreation facilities (Ontario Provincial Government, 2009). Otherwise, the Toronto District School Board would have been forced to close the facilities.
- The Ontario Child Benefit will increase to a maximum payout of eleven hundred dollars per child in 2011-12 so that families can enroll their children in sports, arts, and educational programs. This is an increase from a maximum of six hundred dollars in 2008-09, which amounts to four hundred million dollars more in funding for children (Ontario Provincial Government, 2009).
- The Sport Alliance of Ontario - which serves 2.3 million Ontarians via eighty P.S.O.s - has created the Sport IS Development fund to increase their ability to provide services. The Sport IS Development Fund hopes that private and corporate donations, supplemented by the Trillium Foundation, will increase participation, leadership development, and training for coaches and officials in Ontario (Sport Alliance of Ontario, n.d., p. 3).

FOR TORONTO

INSITUTE FOR SPORT

Canada has been seeking to follow the Australian model for sport, hiring former Olympic swimmer Alex Baumann from his management position Down Under. The Australian Sports Commission is based on sport institutes in major metropolitan areas which offer high performance coaching, sport sciences, funding to N.S.O.s, and other resources. Australian Institute of Sport facilities are located in Canberra, Adelaide, Brisbane, the Gold Cost, Perth, and Sydney (Australian Sports Commission, n.d.).

There is no regional sporting centre in the Greater Toronto Area. If the Golden Horseshoe's 2015 Pan American Games bid succeeds, it will be a boon for local sport fifty sport facilities, such as pools, fields, and tracks will spring up across the region. The commitment from three levels of government was reduced to \$1.4 billion in January 2009 because of the recent economic downturn. If it success, the region will receive over two billion dollars in economic benefit (Canadian Press, 2009).

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Sport participation among children is tied to parental income and parental fitness (Clark, 2005, p. 55), likely due to the high cost and time commitment of sport. Sport participation for students in the lowest household income quintile is forty-four percent, compared to sixty-eight percent for those in the highest. Children from the lowest income are three times as likely to never have participated in organized sport relative to those at the highest level (Active Healthy Kids Canada, 2009, p. 37).

The Provincial Government's Poverty Reduction Strategy recommended an Ontario Child Benefit payment of \$1,310 a number that could make a big difference given that the basic fee to register for an Ontario Basketball club team is at least four hundred dollars, before fundraising (Ontario Provincial Government, 2009).

If sport is not emphasized at home, it must be emphasized at school. Australia provides almost sixty after school community offices across the country (Australian Sports Commission, n.d.). Toronto has a goal of increasing participation in sport and recreation programs to forty percent. The city spends \$30.67 per person on sport and recreation (but \$265.28 on the Toronto Police Service) (Department of Parks and Recreation, 2004, p. 66).

Unfortunately, The Toronto District School Board charges extensive overtime for gym permits after hours, on weekends, and during the summer. This past summer, a number of city organized programs or programs that used city facilities were cancelled due to a strike by city workers.

PARKS AND FACILITIES

Between 1986 and 2001, the number of children who walked to school declined by ten percent. The number of youth who did likewise declined from 38.6% to 30.7%. The presence of parks and playgrounds inspires kids to be active. If the physical environment is welcoming and appears safe, children are more likely to walk to school (Active Healthy Kids Canada, 2009, p. 63). Toronto has a net budget of thirty-four dollars per person for parks and open spaces (Department of Parks and Recreation, 2004, p. 66).

It has been known for years that little details in city planning, such as short blocks, mixed-used buildings, and sidewalks make for welcoming neighbourhoods and encourage citizens of all ages to get out and walk (Jacobs, 1993, p. 233). Yet many developments seem to aid the automobile, the builder, or chain store and rarely the residents of that particular city (Jacobs, 1993, p. 7). One could argue that the undue influence of the Ontario Municipal Board on projects in Toronto perpetuates this trend.

FOR ELITE ATHLETES

In preparation for the 2010 Vancouver Olympics and the 2012 London Olympics, two special funding programs have been created, entitled Own the Podium and Road to Excellence respectively. Half one hundred and ten million dollars in funding for Own the Podium was provided by Sport Canada, with the remainder provided by the Vancouver Organizing Committee, Provincial Governments, and corporate partners (The Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, n.d.).

Special funding from the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (“Quest for Gold”) provided an additional forty-two million dollars to provincial carded athletes. The contribution for the 2009-10 season is ten million dollars (Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion, 2009).

Quest for Gold funding is for elite athletes only. Athletes must be possible participants in the Olympic or Paralympic Games, the Canada Games, or the Ontario Games. For example, Ontario Basketball can use the money to rent facilities for the Nike Centres for Performance but not for the Midget Development Program (Stryker, 2009).

FOR BASKETBALL PLAYERS

CANADA BASKETBALL

The N.S.O. had funding cut by Sport Canada and the Road to Excellence program because of poor results at the Senior international level. Funding dropped from \$1.3 million to \$700,000. This is a critical time for Canada Basketball because the organization has created U16 teams for young basketball players and qualified for the World Championships at that level (The Canadian Press, 2009).

The criteria for full-funding from Sport Canada is:

Since January 01, 1996, the NSO has had at least one top 16 and top half finish in one event at 50% of all Olympic Games and Senior World Championships; or at 50% of all Paralympic Games and AWAD World Championships; or at 50% of all Senior World Championships (non-Olympic sports) (Sport Canada, 2005).

It is difficult for Canada to compete for medals at this time because many countries field excellent teams and Canada Basketball has not had a solid foundation of youth players before the past few years. N.S.O.s are considering an alliance in order to lobby for more consistent funding standards (The Canadian Press, 2009).

ELITE ATHLETES

Only seventy-five Canadian basketball players are carded by Sport Canada, fifteen from Ontario. The amount provided to basketball players in Ontario is slightly over one hundred thousand dollars, less than two percent of funding in the province (Sport Canada, 2009). Belying the low funding ratio, eight percent of all youths participate in the sport, a number that has increased since the 1990s. When the participation rate is calculated based on active youth, it rises to 18.9% (Clark, 2005, p. 58).

An additional twenty basketball players receive Quest for Gold funding (Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion, 2009). Some community groups receive grants from Making Dreams Possible but no basketball organizations receive any money (The Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, n.d.).

FOR COACHES

COACHING STANDARDS

The Australia Sports Commission “supports the development of the Australian sport system from the grassroots to high performance level through our Sport Performance and Development division, which gives national sporting organizations access to information and resources, including funding, policy development advice and management models, education, emerging information technologies and evaluation frameworks (Australian Sports Commission, n.d.).”

This allows coaches from all sports to interact and receive the same training. Until the National Coaching Certification Program (N.C.C.P.) Level IV and V stage in Canada, there is little symmetry between coach training in different sports, although the National Coaching Institute helps a great deal. Still, it is up to coaches to pay for most of their own fees, which is a disincentive.

FUNDING

Government support is necessary to implement a L.T.A.D. program across the country, which will improve the expertise of community groups and provide all athletes will better coaching (Canadian Sport for Life, 2005, p. 46). The Coaches Association of Ontario has used Quest for Gold funding to hold N.C.C.P. Level III Theory courses across the province. The Coaching Association of Canada is offering subsidies of twelve thousand dollars to permit sport organizations to hire young coaches in internship positions (Coaching Association of Canada, 2007).

FOR YOUTH

THE IMPORTANCE OF A ROLE MODEL

In English class, I asked two classes of Grade 9 students about their definition of a hero and solicited examples. We were talking about heroes in literature and film but almost all of the responses were related to sport figures. Whether they want to be a role model or not, it is clear that athletes - professional and amateur - hold a great deal of influence over children and teenagers.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FITNESS

As sport participation has declined during the past twenty years, the percentage of overweight and obese children have increased. In 1978, twelve percent of youth under seventeen years old were overweight and another three percent were obese. In 2004, eighteen percent were overweight and an additional eight percent are obese (Statistics Canada, 2005).

Students are more likely to develop metabolic syndrome, a combination of risk factors such as abdominal obesity, high triglycerides, high LDL cholesterol, glucose intolerance, and high blood pressure (Active Healthy Kids Canada, 2009, p. 21). The average B.M.I. of an adolescent aged 12 to 17 has increased from 20.8 to 22.1 in that time (Statistics Canada, 2005). The average B.M.I. of a youth basketball player is 21.7 (Abdelkrim, El Fazaa, & El Ati, 2007, p. 70).

Eighty-seven percent of Ontario Secondary Schools report that students participate in daily physical education activities but only fifteen percent of elementary schools report likewise. At the high school level in Ontario, classes are usually over thirty minutes in length but not as long as other provinces such as British Columbia (Active Healthy Kids Canada, 2009, p. 75).

THE IMPORTANCE OF CONFIDENCE

Girls have not been enrolling in physical education classes as much as boys and do not participate as vigorously. Female self-efficacy is most strongly with class enjoyment (Active Healthy Kids Canada, 2009, p. 73). At Eastern Commerce Collegiate Institute, Heather-Jo

MacIntosh was very successful by modelling the way, providing plentiful positive feedback, and including a wide variety of different activities in her classes. Enrolment in girls' physical education increased, as did participation on extra-curricular teams.

Seventy-three percent of students who reported that they enjoyed physical education class also reported an increase in academic grades (Active Healthy Kids Canada, 2009, p. 19).

THE IMPORTANCE OF FUN

Currently, athletes over-compete and under-train so there is a lack of fundamental skill development. By imposing adult training and competition programs on adolescents, socialization, the fun of exercise, and the joy of self-actualization are eliminated (Canadian Sport for Life, 2005, p. 17). Less than one percent of youth playing sport will ever be good enough to get a college scholarship and seventy-three percent of children quit sport by age thirteen because it ceases to be fun (S.U.N.Y. Youth Sports Institute, 2009). To promote fitness and health, the government should promote the enjoyment of exercise.

Active play - not necessarily competitive sport - contributes to cognitive, social, emotional, and physical well-being of children. It permits students to use their imagination, conquer fears and challenges, and is associated with healthy brain development (Active Healthy Kids Canada, 2009, p. 56).

ALCOHOL USE

I have observed many university athletes use alcohol as a coping skill. Many spoke about the stress of their schedules, conflicts with coaches, and disappointment with their role on the team. Sixty-one percent of collegiate athletes admit that they have had reduced performance due to alcohol and about three quarters of collegiate basketball players describe themselves as drinkers.

31.3 percent of collegiate athletes drink after training, which can eliminate the effects of training and recovery due to the production of cortisol and the cancellation of R.E.M. sleep. Three to four drinks can cause a reduction in performance of fifteen to twenty percent in collegiate athletes. Speed, strength, and mental function are all impaired. Injury rates are doubled and it can take up to ninety-six hours to fully recover.

Therefore, a basketball player who drinks mid-week may not be totally ready for the games that weekend (Underwood, 2009).

FOR THE FUTURE

DEVELOPING POSITIVE HABITS

The participation rate of athletes aged five to fourteen fell from fifty-seven to fifty-one percent between 1992 and 2005 (Clark, 2005, p. 58). This age group comprises 11.4 percent of Canada's population (Statistics Canada, 2009).

The physical activity of students is tied to their routines. Children and youth are also strongly influenced by their peers. Consequently, increasing pre-school activities and physical activity in elementary school will create positive habits and encourage participation in sport and fitness (Active Healthy Kids Canada, 2009, p. 19).

LONG-TERM ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT

Canada is publicizing a L.T.A.D. model to follow other N.S.O.s. Most of Sport Canada's funding is targeted towards the Training to Compete 2 and Training to Win stages, missing out on the Learning to Train, Training to Train, and Training to Compete stage. Athletes during these stages are at a key stage of physical, cognitive, and emotional development (Canadian Sport for Life, 2005, p. 27). It is essential to have a organized national sport system in place to consistently produce elite athletes (Whitby, Summer 2001, p. 19).

AFTER 2012

There is little long-term funding in Ontario. Many of grants are made on a year-to-year basis and most elite athlete funding ceases after the 2012 games. Ontario Basketball and Canada Basketball are fielding strong U16 and U19 teams but it remains to be seen if funding will be sustained to help players make the Senior National teams.

Other countries have accused Canada of blocking access to 2010 Olympic venues and refusing to allow Canadian athletes to train with their international peers (Branch, 2009). This focus on the podium may come at the expense of integrity, compromising promises that had been made and athlete-coach relationships that have been established over the years.

Canada does not have a complete network of facilities, particularly for summer sports; this ill will may hurt training for future competitions, when Canadians must train elsewhere. I believe that the situation also sabotages Long Term Athlete Development, not to mention the goal of sharing coaching knowledge.

INTERVIEW SUMMARY

COACHING CERTIFICATION

I asked Dr. Kidd spoke about the importance of coaching certification in Canada. Dr. Kidd mentioned how people often remember their coaches better than other leadership figures in their life. He felt that it was ironic that Canadians did not believe in funding coach education, even though they may have benefitted from a special coach in the past.

He believed that it would ensure a higher level of instruction in sport, increased the safety and well-being of participants, and advance the reputation of the profession. However, he cautioned that there are not sufficient resources in Canada to fully regulate the profession.

Dr. Kidd added that researched shows that most cases of abuse occur in community organization, not the school system because teachers who coach have a stronger commitment to education. He said that, “since leadership is the key factor in the educational success of the sport program, it is important that we increase the qualifications and experiences of the coaches.”

TORONTO AS A NATIONAL SPORT CENTRE

In Dr. Kidd’s mind, the only strategy that his worked to increase sport facilities is to bid for major games and increase enthusiasm among politicians and citizens. These major games may be inefficient because a large amount of money is spent on values with a great amount of seating. Also, since facilities should be created based on need, Dr. Kidd argued that it was better for Canada to make this decision instead of the International Olympic Committee.

There is growing support for a Pan-Canadian Comprehensive Strategy of Facility Renewal among provincial sport ministers. It is hopeful that the sesquicentennial in 2027 will spark infrastructure creation and renewal. Dr. Kidd mentioned that Canada is far behind other countries with similar populations and resources relative. At this time, I mentioned Gerard Kennedy’s recent accusations earlier in the week that federal investment and parks and recreation may be politicized, given how Conservative ridings received an average of 2.1 million dollars relative to the 1.3 million for Liberal ridings (Campion-Smith, 2009).

We discussed how organizations such as O.C.A.P. or the University of Toronto Student Union protest the bids for major games. Dr. Kidd stated that after the two failed Olympic bids, an equivalent amount was not spent on low income housing and poverty reduction. He understands their frustrations but mentioned that democratically managed sport facilities would provide greater access for low-income children. He was slightly dismayed that two underfunded groups, sport and poverty groups were often at odds.

AHTLETE DEVELOPMENT

Dr. Kidd then spoke about how Canada succeeds in youth sport but does experience proportional success at the elite level. When I asked about how Canada could get more athletes at the top of the pyramid, Dr. Kidd alluded to the University of Mosow - a building with a wide base and tall narrow tower in the centre - stating that it better presented the distribution of athletes than a pyramid.

As a society, we seemed to have lost the culture of healthy and active living, including participation in sport. We don’t encourage athletes to move from recreational athletes to the next level as they become



The University of Moscow

teenagers. Ontario is not doing a good enough job to retain elite athletes in the system as they reach fourteen and fifteen years of age.

Dr. Kidd cited a quote by Alex Baumann about how team sports experience difficulty competing for funding because there may be two team medals for team sports (male and female) but twenty-seven in an individual sport such as Track and Field. According to Dr. Kidd, Sport Canada and the Canadian Olympic Committee have privileged the individual sports where more medals are available.

ALCOHOL AND UNIVERSITY SPORT

There is no formal policy for varsity athletes and alcohol use at the University of Toronto. Dr. Kidd said that alcohol abuse can curtail performance and destroy relationship but responsible use is a decision for any adult who is nineteen years or older to make by themselves. He suggested that the research at this time regarding responsible use of alcohol is not conclusive. There is no initiative at the moment for a blanket policy.

Dr. Kidd mentioned a champion runner when he was competing who became so nervous before meets that he would have two drinks the night before, sleep for twelve hours, and then run away with the meet. It can also help team bonding, although Dr. Kidd stressed that nobody should be excluded if they chose not to drink and there should be alternatives to alcohol available. If a team adopts a standard for alcohol use, it should be respected but each individual should make their own choices.

AFTER 2012

What will happen to funding after the 2012 Olympic Games? “Your crystal ball is as good as mine,” replied Dr. Kidd. He is optimistic that the Pan Am Games will continue funding. Afterwards, it will be necessary to show that governments are receiving a return from their contribution to sport, in terms of athletes remaining and Ontario and succeeding, greater public fitness, and sport tourism.

It is important to monitor the results of programs such as Quest for Gold in order to tell the government that they invested in sport for certain goals because those goals have been reached, funding should be continued (Kidd, 2009).

CONCLUSION

Firstly, I greatly appreciate Dr. Kidd’s contribution of his time, knowledge, and experience.

Sport in Canada is not in the best position but it is moving forwards. As leaders, coaches must help show how sport can help society. Sport can have many positive effects and we should document what we see so we can advocate for continued funding and public support. Irrespective of the level of competition (if any), Canadians should remain active as much as possible.

3

Book Reports

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INTRODUCTION

I misplaced the actual book report that I delivered at the National Coaching Institute. Here are five reviews that I have compiled for no rhyme or reason. They may be related to basketball or not but they improved my leadership abilities.

In class, I hope that students learn one thing each day that helps improve themselves. It might be about the subject that is being taught or it might be about communication, problem solving, or teamwork. To me, there is no limit to where one can find information about self-actualization.

DREAM BIG DREAMS

CITATION

Hickey, M. (2006). *Dream big dreams: The Jack Donohue story*. Miami Beach: Maya Publishing Group

LESSONS LEARNED

This is a thoroughly entertaining biography that is required reading for Canadian Basketball coaches. Both Andy Higgins - who knew Coach Donohue personally - and I found the book to be very insightful and had difficulty putting it down. I've listed three lessons any coach can take from Jack Donohue's life and coaching career.

HELPING PLAYERS

Jack Donohue helped the Canadian Senior Men's National Team, the College of the Holy Cross, and Power Memorial players, among others, lessons about teamwork, responsibility, sacrifice, and enjoying life, that they remember to this day. He exemplified the potential of the coach to shape the lives of young people.

Although the players may have questioned Donohue at the time, they now appreciated how much he helped them improve themselves.

Players must understand their role on the team, receive an opportunity to do what they do best, and know that someone on the team cares for them (source: Author Unknown). In the coming months I will try to follow Coach Donohue's lead and stress these aspects of my coaching philosophy.

Donohue never abandoned a friend when they were down, including acquaintances who were incarcerated, Al McGuire during his illness, and Steve Konchalski when he was fighting Basketball Canada (successfully) over his wrongful termination. He maintained

his relationship with players and coaches from New York City like Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Jack Curran, and Lou Carnesecca for the rest of his life.

TECHNICAL FOULS

While coaching Power Memorial as an opponent was shooting foul shots, Donohue strode onto the court and took the ball from the player's hands. He refused to give it back until the official listened to his concerns. (I once had to call timeout to speak to an official about a technical foul that he assessed to a U.T.S. player for using profanity; perhaps I should have been more forthright.) When the U.S.S.R. was taking Canada to the woodshed, Donohue entered the court, assumed a defensive stance, and began guarding the Soviet ballhandler.

After the "T", Donohue exclaimed that "someone on this team has to play defence." Like my colleague Kash stated this afternoon: "different players are motivated in different ways and a coach must know what buttons to push." Caring for players means standing up for them during games.

SUPPORTING OTHER COACHES

Donohue was known and appreciated for the help that he provided to other coaches and the Coaches of Canada organization. Many coaches in Canada are part of the Donohue family tree (Ken and Kathy Shields, Steve Konchalski and Doc Ryan, Jay Triano, Olga Hrycak, Leo Rautins, and Chris Critelli). Coaches must not only mentor players but others in their profession, a responsibility Donohue never shirked.

Once, Donohue and a friend were volunteering at a local high school practice when the school's Athletic Director walked into the gym and asked for their names. Donohue introduced himself as the former coach of Canada's Senior Men's National Team. The A.D. asked them to leave because they didn't have the "proper qualifications" to coach at that school. I know an administrator who also forbade a former Olympic coach from making an appearance at his school but illuminating the error of his ways will inspire neither a critical self-evaluation nor spur the school to improve their methods (Hickey, 2006).

THE BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST

CITATION

Halberstam, D. (1969). *The Best and the brightest*. New York City: Ballantine Books.

LESSONS LEARNED

"Those who do not read history are doomed to repeat it," according to George Santayana. According to David Halberstam's book, *The Best and the Brightest* - which exposes how the Kennedy and Johnson cabinets of the 1960s handled Vietnam - it may not be so

simple. John F. Kennedy's administration had lofty goals: some of the most educated men in the country sought to redefine the role of the United States on the world stage. Some sought to curtail the arms race, others sought to establish a new, modern "Great Society" back home. Despite their best intentions and their amazingly bright minds, they failed miserably. Although the scholars had many good ideas, they lacked the aptitudes to implement them properly.

"The charts look good," said Walt Rostow, National Security Advisor to Lyndon B. Johnson, in 1967. Yet despite that claim, the situation in Vietnam was worsening. Those making decisions didn't have the proper statistics and consequently made incorrect choices. Many Far East experts had been purged from the State department and few individuals with experience in Southeast Asia remained to analyze the events.

Some information was false due to incompetence, other information ignored because decisions makers didn't want to acknowledge what was happening. The United States viewed the war quantitatively (believing their sheer numbers advantage would win), rather than qualitatively (and acknowledge that the Viet Cong was employing a different type of warfare). Some information was even falsified in order to avoid excessive media coverage. Ironically, when Johnson's team lied about the true cost of the war, it wasn't that the country couldn't afford the higher figure but the fact that he had lie that helped bring him down.

"He's my intellectual," said Johnson about Rostow. Johnson was somewhat paranoid about Kennedy's appointees and how they treated him. Advisors were hired based on the opinions, not their ability to understand a situation. Robert McNamara, the Secretary of Defense, was fired because he opposed an escalation of the bombing in North Vietnam. Aides were reluctant to bring their superiors information that might seem negative or pessimistic.

Throughout the administration, there was widespread refusal to admit wrong and accept weaknesses. Once the conflict escalated, the United States felt reluctant to withdraw because they didn't want the world to think they were conceding defeat to a Communist country. There was also a reluctance to change and alter a course of action once it had been understand.

To me, a surprising fact was that many of the cabinet came from families that had advised the president a generation before (and some families continued to advise a generation later). Although they claimed not to be political, personal grudges and mistrust permeated the administration.

"The only difference between the Kennedy assassination and mine is that I am alive and it has been more tortuous," complained Johnson during the 1968 primary season. Halberstam has written a detailed history of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. The book covers how people achieved their positions at the time and what happened after it all fell apart. It was not one decision that led to the disaster in Vietnam but many small choices, some made repeatedly.

There was a fair amount of moral relativism in the “War Room.” Robert McNamara, a very intelligent man who had rebuilt Ford in his previous job would often ask: “What makes it immoral if you lose and not immoral if you win?” It’s like the coach who gets judged for the results, not the process. Sam Mitchell had good results in 2006 and won the Coach of the Year Award. He was fired in 2008. Did Mitchell’s process change significantly in those two years? Johnson distrusted McNamara immensely because he saw him as an intellectual outsider.

All men dream; but not equally.

Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds awake to find that it was vanity.

But the dreamers of day are dangerous men.

That they may act their dreams with open eyes to make it possible.

- T.E. Lawrence after World War I

The 660 page chronicle is incredibly fascinating and sometimes depressing. Any leader can learn from this text and improve themselves and their team. Any person could read this, or Lawrence’s Seven Pillars of Wisdom, or The Reason Why by Cecil Woodham-Smith (about the ill-fated Charge of the Light Brigade), and wonder how the same mistakes are made over and over again, even today.

The old adage repeated by Winston Churchill seems to be appropriate: “Those that fail to learn from history, are doomed to repeat it” (Halberstam, 1969).

THE WAGES OF WINS

CITATION

Berri, D.J., M. B. Schmidt, and S.L. Brook (2006). *The Wages of wins*. Stanford: Stanford Business Books.

LESSONS LEARNED

This book raised interesting questions regarding assessment and evaluation. Factors contributing to victories and the rationale behind coaching decisions were studied among other issues. Statistics are more prolific than ever before but whether the numbers are correctly applied remains to be determined.

SCORING AND WINS

Fortunately, the authors scrutinized the Association extensively, finding that scoring is highly correlated to winning. Therefore coaches should play the five players who contribute to the highest scoring rate (who also limit the opponent’s scoring rate).

A player can affect points per possession by scoring more points and maintaining possession of the ball. Shooting efficiency, rebounding, steals, and turnovers are key variables. To keep the issue simple, I will deal with offensive factors and assume that the same issues are relevant on defence, but in reverse. A good defensive team should force the opponent to take tough shots, rebound the ball, and steal the ball when possible.

Apparently, rebounding (maintain possession with an offensive rebound and ending an opponent's possession with a defensive rip) is better correlated to winning than actually putting the ball in the basket. Likewise, when calculating individual Win-Shares, preventing turnovers or causing opponents to turn the ball over permits a player to compensate for below average scoring ability.

DECISIONS

When awarding minutes and contracts, the authors found that coaches and general managers tend to view basketball as five 1-on-1 games instead of one 5-on-5 game and attribute too much weight to scoring. I thought that Berri, Schmidt, and Brook ignored the elements of leadership and chemistry. When variables become intangible, analysis becomes incredibly complicated.

LINGERING QUESTIONS THAT ARE NOT ADDRESSED BY THE WAGES OF WINS:

1. What about the player who inspires teammates to work harder?
2. Points lead to Win-Shares but who gets the credit when a ball screen leads to a basket?
3. Are there elements that permit a team to become greater than the sum of its parts?

I've studied this issue somewhat and found that it is possible to isolate successful combinations of players. The impact of leadership and player chemistry on a game that is played 5-on-5 in its finest form but can be isolated by film review, software like Dartfish, and comprehensive statistics are imperative.

ASSISTS

Surprisingly, the assist statistic is largely negligible and not correlated to winning. I think it is still a positive occurrence because an assist or a pass that leads to an assist is unlikely to result in a turnover and will probably move the ball into a location from where a higher percentage shot can be taken.

SCORING "RUNS"

The authors dismiss the idea of momentum but a team that shortens opponent possessions by rebounding well, maintains control of the ball, and takes good shots is likely to curtain runs by the opponent while simultaneously being predisposed to making runs of their own.

Irrespective of offensive skill the numbers and empirical evidence reveal that a team cannot give an opponent too many easy first (bad shots and turnovers that feed the fast break) and second (offensive rebounds) chances. “One and done”, “the ball is 24K gold”, “we’re fighting an uphill battle”, and other coaching aphorisms are entirely apropos when a team is losing control of the ball and the game.

THE INCREASED ROLE OF NUMBERS AND DETAILS GUYS

“Guys are sharing the ball and it looks good.”

- Mike D’Antoni

On the Phoenix Suns coaching staff in 2005-06, Mike D’Antoni (now with the New York Knicks) often made decisions by “feel” whereas Marc Iavaroni (now filling the same role with the Toronto Raptors after an unsuccessful head coaching stint with the Memphis Grizzlies) provided more tangible analysis and facts (McCallum, 2006, p. 15). Like the heroes of *The Princess Bride* combined the cunning of Westley, the strength of Fezzik, and the speed of Inigo Montoya, a multitude of perspectives are present on successful teams (Berri, Schmidt, & Brook, 2006).

GO UP FOR GLORY

CITATION

Russell, B. (1966). *Go up for glory*. Berkley: Medallion.

LESSONS LEARNED

Bill Russell’s precursor to Second Wind (a frank and honest account of sport and life that I thoroughly enjoyed), Russell Rules (a seemingly clichéd book about leadership that I hope to avoid as long as possible), and Red and Me (a touching account of the mutual respect and friendship that he shared with coach Red Auerbach) is a fascinating account of his youth and career with Red Auerbach’s Boston Celtics.

One particularly remarkable theme is the idea of an incredibly thin line between success and failure: choosing a collegiate scholarship instead of a job in a shipping year because of a chance encounter with a scout, focusing on the game of basketball skills instead of juvenile delinquency because a coach made Russell the sixteenth member or his fifteen player team. This theme is exemplified by Russell’s account of the 1965 Eastern Conference Final seventh game. Leading Wilt Chamberlain’s 76ers 110-109, Russell simply needed to inbound the ball for the Celtics to run out the clock and win. However, the inbound pass deflected off of one of the support wires connecting the basket to the ceiling of the Boston Garden and Philadelphia was awarded possession.

Russell fronted Chamberlain in the post, forcing Hal Greer to choose another target. John Havlicek rotated down and stole the inbound pass, guaranteeing the Celtics a trip to the Association finals. Boston had gone for a comfortable position, to dire straits, back to victory in a matter of moments, all based on one or two inches.

Another popular concept with Russell is the desire to win. Russell has won two N.C.A.A. championships, eleven Association titles, and an Olympic Gold Medal. Everything that Russell, Auerbach or the rest of the Celtics did was designed to help win another title. Despite their serious goals, there was also a sense of humour in the Celtics' locker room and this helped relieve the tension of a long season immensely.

Obviously, Auerbach also possessed a phenomenal ability to motivate the team with his intensity and his basketball knowledge enabled him to meld a diverse group of players into a solid unit. Since every player accepted their role and stayed within it, the 1956-69 Boston Celtics were the definition of a successful team.

The two worked well together because Auerbach was tolerant of Russell's idiosyncrasies because he performed on the court. Auerbach respected all of his players equally but treated them differently, according to their needs and wants. The coach may have a stern image, but he was always open to feedback from others and willing to take suggestions from players.

Russell did not fit the mold of a traditional Association centre but Auerbach did not try to change him; he adapted the Celtics' systems to suit Russell's strengths. Likewise, when Bob Cousy arrived in Boston, Auerbach did not curtail his extravagant ballhandling and fancy passes; so long as the ball got to the right person at the right time, Auerbach didn't care how it got there. Throughout his career as a coach and a general manager, Auerbach never became set in his ways: he perceived how things were changing around him and adjusted his philosophy accordingly (Russell, 1966).

SNOOKER AND SKIING

CITATIONS

Gallwey, T. and B. Kriegel (1977). *Inner skiing*. Des Plaines: Bantam Books.
Richler, M. (2001). *On Snooker*. Toronto: Random House.

LESSONS LEARNED

ON SNOOKER

I was positively uncertain about the content of this tiny tome when I purchased it at the used book store. Reading the synopsis on the reverse, I gathered that Mordecai Richler was an avid fan of the game who would include anecdotes from throughout his life. Perhaps the author would delve into the kinship between the literati and elite athletes or outline the importance of competition in a young man's life. Perhaps he admired a professional athlete

from afar or found similarities between creativity on paper and canvas and creativity on felt (and by extension grass or hardwood since certain skills permeate all sports). I bought *On Snooker* anyways because I knew only one fact about the volume: that it would be well-written.

Accomplished author Richler weaves a myriad of player profiles together to describe the typical snooker athlete. Despite the formal nature of the sport, the black-tie attire, and the complex rules, snooker players face as much pressure as any other athlete. The sport possesses such a fine margin of error that minute miscues can trigger a run by the opponent and the end of match. Each frame begins with the same setup and players aim to make a similar sequence of shots. However, matches are always unique, a characteristic attributable to the mental not the physical aspect of snooker. Complete concentration during competition and practice is required for success.

Snooker players seem to have problems with gambling and substance abuse. Irrespective of the nature of the match, players must be able to leave the outcome on the table and move on. The skill level has risen so dramatically that the life of a champion snooker player is almost as short as an N.F.L. running back.

Lastly, Richler ruminates about the role sport plays in life. Even the most erudite character can take pleasure by supporting the Montreal Canadiens or boxing from Madison Square Garden. For many, it's necessary to enter the playing field and prove their abilities to themselves, more than anyone else (Richler, 2001).

INNER SKIING

This slim tome contains good mental training tips and delves into the topic of Tachypsychia while skiing. The high speeds and panoramic views create a mental state where one feels totally at one with the mountains. Gallwey and Kriegel devote a good part of the book to being sensitive and observant. They feel that it is important to remember how a particular skill feels, especially when done correctly. They write about appreciating the environment, using all five senses, and getting as much feedback as possible. Awareness increases control.

A memorable chapter described how the best self-image when attempting to improve oneself is no self-image at all. The authors feel that an open mind has no limits and allows one to reach their potential. A skier may fear increasing their speed or attacking more advanced hills. They can dispel their fear by analyzing the perceived dangers and understanding what they are doing.

Mental fears (as opposed to physical fears which will release hormones such as adrenaline) lead to muscles tightening and infrequent breathing. The athlete may move stiffly or apply inappropriate technique adjustments in order to prevent injury. Each action takes more effort and endurance is reduced. Coaches must help athletes eliminate these fears in order to reach their peak potential (Gallway & Kriegel, 1977).

4

Conclusion

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 - Model the Way, page 1
 - Make the Most of Myself, page 1
 - Teach All Aspects of the Game, page 1
 - Push the Limits of Coaching and Teaching, page 1
- **Works Cited...** page 2

MY CONTRACT WITH MYSELF

MODEL THE WAY

- To limit myself to two drinks and avoid drugs and smoking because that is what I believe players should do
- To follow proper nutrition, refuse to use stimulants, and attempt to reduce my coffee (and caffeine) consumption by fifty percent
- To contact team members on a daily basis and always be open and available to student-athletes
- To be direct, open, and honest; to always exemplify integrity

MAKE THE MOST OF MYSELF

- To constantly self-evaluate myself to see what I can do better
- To engage in continuous learning to enrich my teaching and coaching abilities
- To improve the weaknesses with are current my focal points:
 - building relationships with players
 - coaching aggression and toughness
- To look for potential: in players, my fellow coaches, and myself

TEACH ALL ASPECTS OF THE GAME

- To instruct skills that are not prominent - yet still required on successful teams - such as passing, moving without the ball, communication, defensive footwork, and the little things
- To coach players about making critical decisions under pressure

PUSH THE LIMITS OF COACHING AND TEACHING

- To search everywhere for information that can make a difference
- To use statistics to provide more accurate feedback
- To share information with other coaches in order to better assist athletes and promote good practices within the sport
- To maintain my website and blog as a coaching resource
- To be creative

This is my commitment to myself and to other coaches,

Brock D. Bourgase

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"A leader is best when people barely know he exists, not so good when people obey and acclaim him, worse when they despise him. But of a good leader, who talks little, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: 'we did this ourselves.'"

- Lao-Tse