

II. The AD's Dream Coach by Dale Hierlmeir

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Coaches come in a variety of shapes, colors and sizes: however, it is not the physical characteristics of a coach that determines coaching efficiency, productivity and ultimately success, but rather it is the unseen human values that one possesses that raise one's stock to be an above average coach. What characteristics must a coach possess to contribute to coaching success and to gain athletic administrator support? Following are some of the qualities that comprise the athletic director's "dream Coach".

D Dedication. Webster defines dedication as devoted to a cause, ideal or purpose. Regardless of the sport, coaches who are dedicated to a sport structure their daily lifecycle to include their passion. Devoted coaches are knowledgeable and educated regarding mechanics, skill techniques, nutrition, psychology, strategy, and methods of conditioning. While some good coaches may be book taught, ideally a dedicated coach is motivated intrinsically and possesses an inner drive targeted toward the advancement of a sport. At the end of the day, the dedicated coach always asks, "Is there anything else I can do to help?"

R Reliability. Reliable is defined as being dependable, giving the same result on successive trials. Reliability is a measuring stick that is used to gauge dependability and trustworthiness. The Dream Coach can be counted on to prepare his or her team for practice and competition; to aid the athletic administrator in planning schedules, transportation and officials: submitting paperwork for rosters, awards, inventory and year-end check-out, in a timely manner, overseeing equipment and to be trusted as a loyal supporter of the athletic department. Like the runner who comes from behind to win or the dependable free-throw shooter who always comes through in the clutch, the Dream Coach can be counted on to operate a successful program.

E Enthusiasm. Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm". An enthusiast is described as one who is ardently attached to a cause object or pursuit. It goes without saying that energy, excitement and exhilaration are the driving forces that bond the coach, athlete and sport and help to make coaching fun. The anticipation of witnessing the positive transformation of athletic performance throughout a season is significantly rewarding for a coach and fuels the fire of enthusiasm. Although rigid draconian type coaches may be enthusiastic in their own way athletic directors appreciate coaches who generate positive enthusiasm for their sport and pass on that enthusiasm to their athletes.

A Attitude. Attitude is a mental position, feeling or emotion toward a fact or state. Attitudes exist under a number of disguises, such as optimistic and pessimistic or positive and negative. While coaches may coach with one style of attitude and present another style of attitude to the media perhaps, all of us have seen those too few and far between rare coaches who have mystically developed a genuine positive attitude. If there is one human characteristic trait that one would select to role model, it might be positive attitude. After all, as the saying goes, "Attitudes are contagious. Is your worth catching?"

M Motivation. If force times speed equals power ($F \times S = P$), then attitude times enthusiasm equals motivation ($A \times E = M$). Motivation is a force stimulus or influence that causes a person to act. There are a number of types of ways to motivate. Three types of motivation are positive reward motivation,

negative reward motivation, and fear motivation; and those can be verbal or physical in nature, running from one end of the spectrum to the other. We've heard often that, "you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink." However, the intelligent, perceptive and innovative athletic director's Dream Coach invents strategies to salt the tongue of the proverbial horse analogy.

C Character. Character is defined as an aggregate of qualities that distinguish one person from another or moral constitution. In general the cumulative discerning qualities refer especially to moral qualities and ethical standards and principles one possesses; therefore a number of human character traits may appear, such as honesty, trustworthiness, respect, humility, fairness and sportsmanship. Dream Coaches possess many of these character traits which through osmosis are passed to his or her athletes. Coaches who lack desirable character traits have difficulty influencing athletes positively, since one cannot teach what one does not possess.

O Organization. Organization keeps everything on track. It is the network or webbing that consolidates all aspects of a sports program into a well-functioning unit that flows harmoniously when it is present and fall apart in its absence. Athletic administrators respect coaches who are well-structured; and they hold organized coaches in high esteem because it helps to make the over-rigorous job of directing athletics more efficient.

A Ambition. Ambitious means to be strongly desirous or eager. Successful coaches always feel that more can be accomplished; and there is always room for improvement, not only from a coaching standpoint but also from an athletic performance perspective. Exceptional coaches not only have goals but also reset goals as they are reached, reinforcing the fact that they are never really satisfied. There is always more to achieve and records are meant to be broken, including personal goals. Athletic directors love coaches who have ambition.

C Communication. Communication is fundamental to coaching and extends to athletes, parents, the coaching staff, athletic office, administration, comrades, the media and vendors. Although everyone communicates in some capacity, Dream Coaches possess the interpersonal skills, personality and articulation necessary to hold the captive attention of the audiences. Everyone benefits from a coach with the ambition to communicate, especially the athletic director who is kept informed on regular basis of all aspects of the coach's program.

H Honorable. Webster define honor as having high respect as for worth merit or rank. Also honor may suggest a combination of liking and respect. Honorable coaches have developed respect for themselves in the coaching world not only because of their achievements but also because of their teaching research, work and advancement of their sport. Providing all other quality characteristics are present, a coach might gain honorability by having been successful in a coaching career, by having been a former standout athlete, or by having collegiate experience or beyond. For an athletic administrator honorability in a coach is an attractive leadership characteristic because it means fewer possibilities of a snafus occurring and a greater probability of program success.

The aim of all athletic administrators is to provide the optimum coaching leadership possible to direct sport programs. To this end, athletic directors strive to evaluate the human value characteristics required to meet the needs of athletes. While no one is perfect and seemingly unlikely to possess all of the precise human value traits required to be a successful coach, these suggestions serve as a guide to some of the quality characteristics of coaches athletic administrators endorse.