

Training Youth Athletes How to Lead



One Team, One Dream MHSAA Captains Clinic

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The Impact of Leadership

- ▶ Why develop team leadership and leaders?
- ▶ Why is teaching youth about leadership important for our society?

“A common mistake among those who work in sport is spending a disproportional amount of time on x's and o's” as compared to time spent learning about people.”

~Mike Kryzewski, Duke Basketball Coach



The Coach as Leader



**Who did you model
yourself after as a
coach?**

**What have you
learned from that
model leader about
being a leader?**

**What leadership
qualities did they
exhibit?**

**What do you teach
your athletes about
leadership?**

Leadership can be Learned

- ▶ Youth learn to lead by having opportunities to lead AND by being educated about leadership
- ▶ Status quo – coaches are not doing much to teach leadership



Session Objectives

- ▶ Define Leadership for High School Athletics
- ▶ Discuss How to Teach Leadership
- ▶ Examine and Commit to a Plan for Teaching Leadership within Your Team



Defining Leadership for High School Athletics

Section 1



What is Leadership?



- ▶ Define Leadership
 - What does a good leader do?

- ▶ Leadership Profile
 - Where I'm at
 - Where I want to be
 - How I'm going to get there

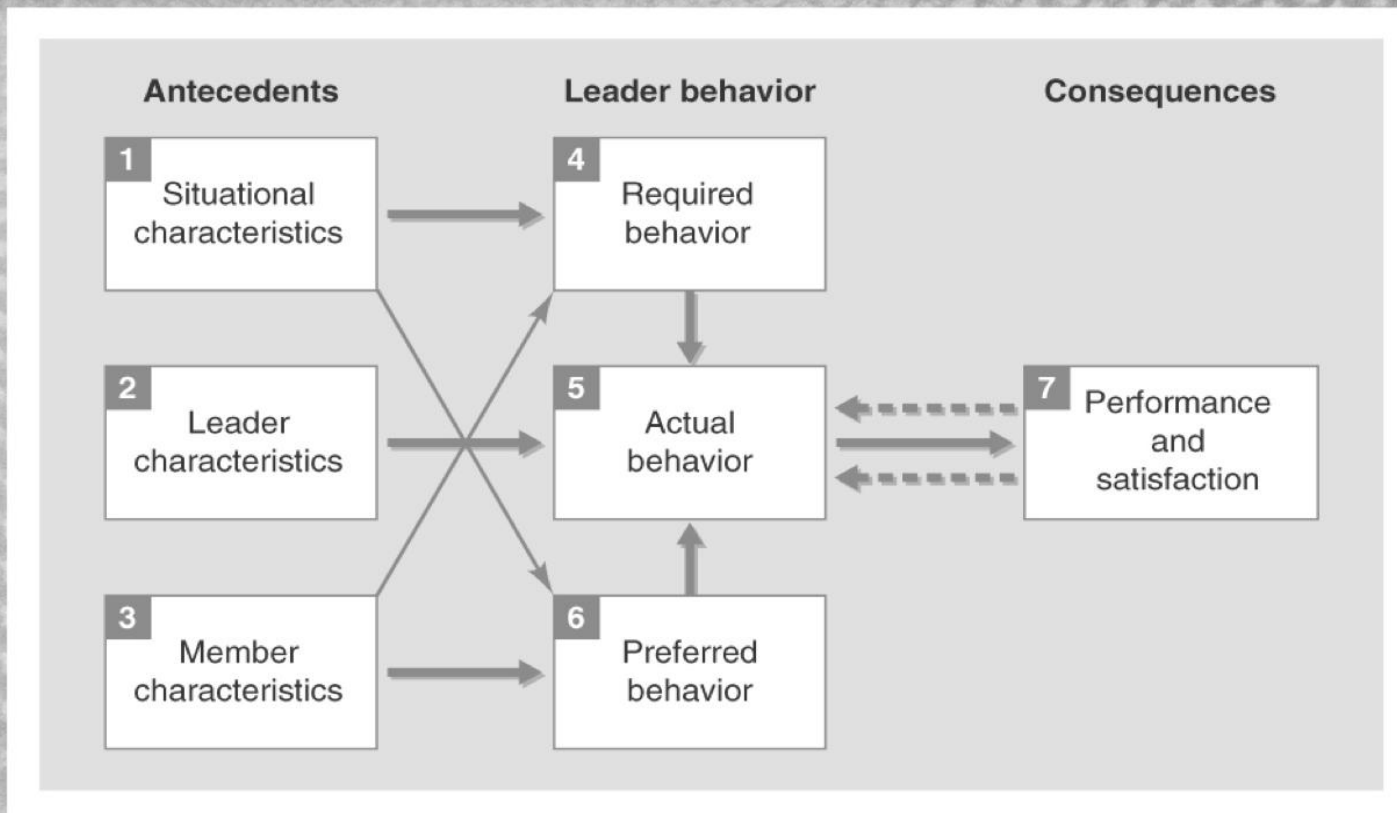
What is Leadership?

- ▶ Broadly defined as...
- ▶ a behavioral process in which an individual influences another individual or group to accomplish a set of shared goals

(Barrow, 1977; Northouse, 2004)



The Multidimensional Model of Sport Leadership



Chelladurai, 1980

Teaching High School Athletes How to Lead

Section 2



Teaching HS Athletes How to Lead

Instead of molding clay you are helping the clay mold itself. (Larson)




Teaching HS Athletes How to Lead

1. When to set firm boundaries and when to be flexible?
2. When to support an athlete's goals and when to challenge them?
3. How to grant athletes choice and autonomy without putting them at risk (or disadvantage)?
4. When to listen and be empathic and when to give one's point of view? and,
5. When to let athletes learn from mistakes?
(Larson)

5 TOUGH QUESTIONS

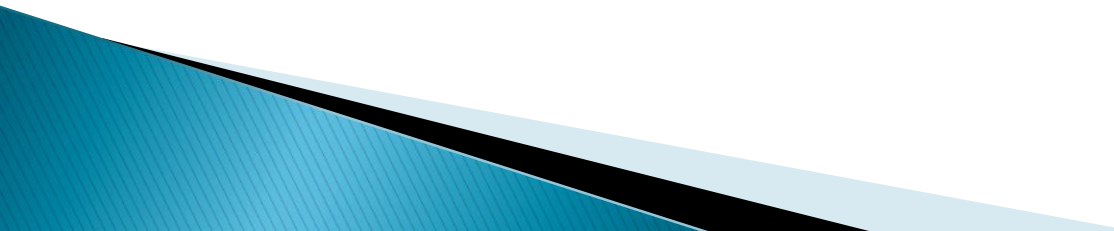
How to Teach HS Athletes Leadership

- ▶ Define Leadership for You
 - ▶ Model Leadership
 - ▶ Effectively Identify your Leaders/Captains
 - ▶ Give them Responsibilities that are Meaningful
 - ▶ Communicate with them as a Leader
 - Communicate Clear Expectations
 - Discuss Team Issues
 - Ask Questions
 - Listen
 - Discuss Their Plans for Leading & Give Feedback
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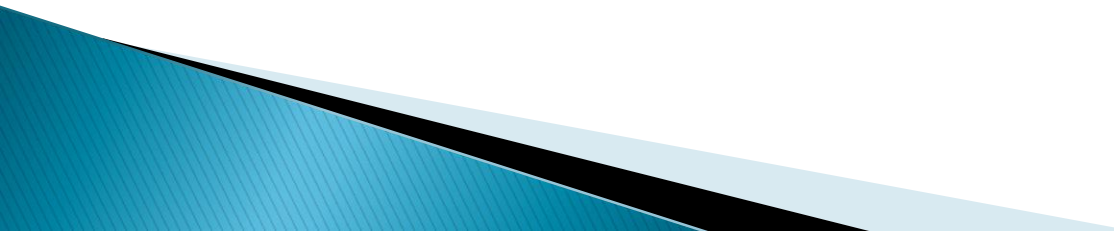
What is Your Definition of Leadership?



Model Leadership

- ▶ What are the difficulties with modeling leadership?
 - ▶ In what areas of modeling leadership could you improve?
 - Emotional control
 - Composure/Poise before, during, after games
 - Listening and Communicating
 - Optimism and Hope
 - Focus
 - Practice Intensity and Enthusiasm
- 

Modeling Leadership

- ▶ Must develop trust with leaders
 - ▶ If you don't open communication fails to exist
 - ▶ One of the many ways you develop trust is by being a consistent model of appropriate leader behavior
 - ▶ How else can you exhibit trust in your team leaders?
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Effectively Identifying Leaders / Captains

- ▶ *Select the right people*
 - Clearly define what you're looking for in a captain before you select them.
 - Select the right people to be captains, not just the best players, the most popular, or your favorites.
 - Do your homework and take your time to identify leaders. For example, you might ask the opinions of support staff.

Leadership Plan

► How will I select my captains? (Voelker, 2009)

Coach Appointment	Coach/Team Combined	Coach/Athlete Split Vote
Does extensive research to determine leaders	Vote with rationale Coach maintains veto power if poor rationale	Coaches pick captain Athletes pick assistants
Job interview	Evaluate leadership Create ballot of x players Players vote (after educated on expectations)	Athletes pick 2 Coaches insert 3 rd “rotating captain”
	End of season vote for next season Coaches add someone	

- ▶ “The thing I tell my coaches about captain selection is to make sure that they’re choosing someone that everyone in their program from kindergarten on up can look up to. So if they’re making poor choices, they shouldn’t be a captain.”
 - Current Michigan High School Coach

Give Meaningful Responsibilities

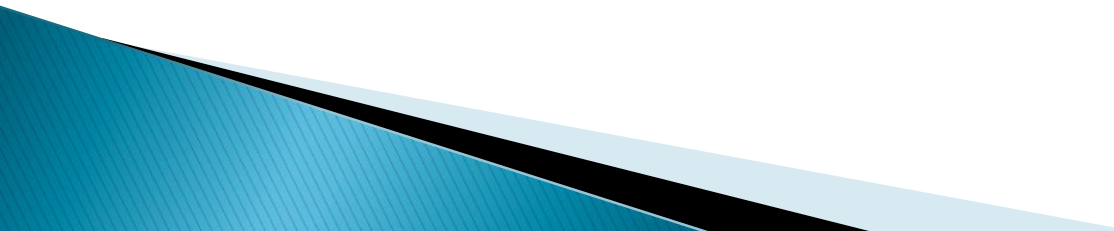
- ▶ How do you give up some control but not too much?
- ▶ What should leaders be responsible for?
- ▶ If trained well and a good leader what could they do?

Tell me and I'll forget; show me and I may remember; involve me and I'll understand.

Chinese Proverb

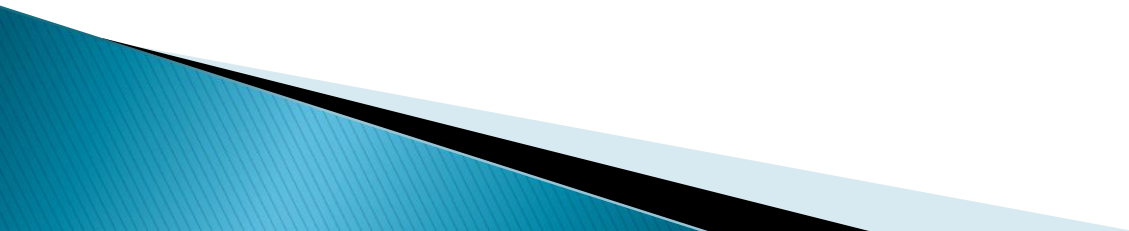


Communicate with them as a Leader

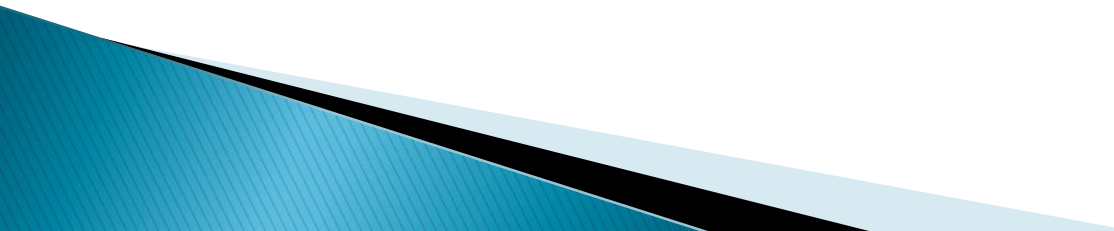
- ▶ Different kind of communication
 - Less top-down, open, transparent
 - Cannot be defensive when they are exercising leadership – communicating to you tough issues/what you might not want to hear
 - ▶ Private meetings routinely to understand pulse of team, provide feedback, listen...
 - ▶ Communicate Clear Expectations
 - ▶ Discuss Team Issues
 - ▶ Ask Questions and then Listen
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Leadership Plan

- ▶ What are my expectations of team leaders?
- ▶ How will I communicate with team leaders?



Asking Questions

- ▶ Why ask questions?
 - ▶ Leading is more than telling student-athletes what to do.
 - ▶ You will be amazed at what you can learn.
 - ▶ Eliminates your assumptions and speculations.
 - ▶ Confirms coaches and athletes are on the same page.
 - ▶ Understand pulse of the team.
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The GROW MODEL



Source: Alexander, G.

Examples of useful questions when using the GROW Model – GOAL

- ▶ What is it you would like to discuss?
- ▶ What would you like to achieve?
- ▶ What would you like to happen that is not happening now, or what would you like not to happen that is happening now?
- ▶ What outcome would you like from this session/conversation/practice?

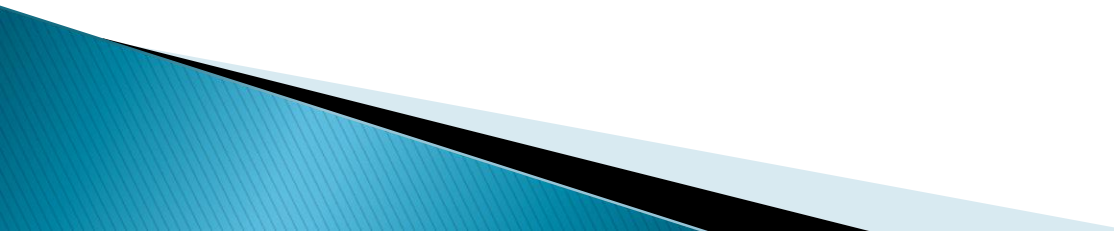
Examples of useful questions when using the GROW Model – REALITY

- ▶ What is happening at the moment?
- ▶ How do you know that this is accurate?
- ▶ When does this happen?
- ▶ What have you tried so far?

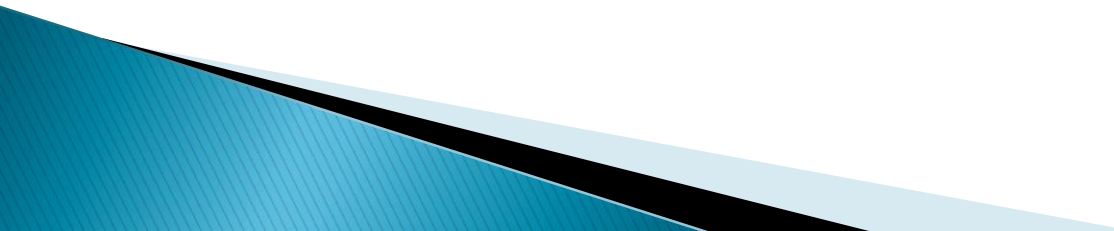
Examples of useful questions when using the GROW Model – OPTIONS

- ▶ What could you do to change the situation?
- ▶ What alternatives are there to that approach?
- ▶ Tell me what are the possible things you could try?
- ▶ What approach/actions have you seen used, or used yourself, in similar circumstances?
- ▶ Who might be able to help?
- ▶ Would you like suggestions from me?
- ▶ Which options do you like most?
- ▶ What are the benefits and pitfalls of these options?
- ▶ Would you like to choose an option to act on?

Examples of useful questions when using the GROW Model - **WILL**

- ▶ What are the next steps?
 - ▶ Precisely when will you take them?
 - ▶ What might get in the way?
 - ▶ Do you need to log the steps in your diary?
 - ▶ What support do you need?
 - ▶ How and when will you enlist that support?
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Handling a Concern with a Leader

- ▶ Scenario Role Play – asked to use divergent questions
 - ▶ List your GROW model questions
 - ▶ Ask Questions versus Tell
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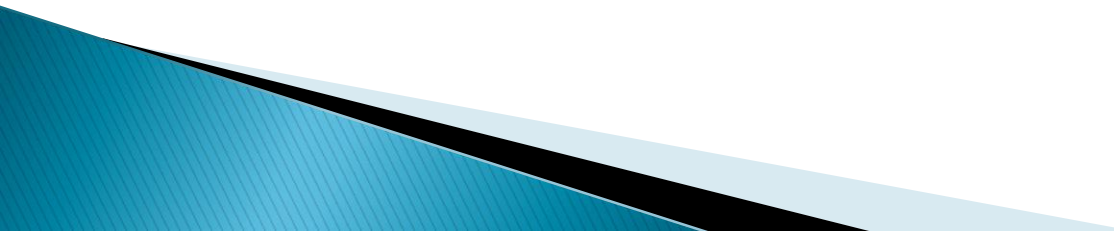
Active Listening

We capture and process only 20% of what is communicated to us.



"Communication isn't all about talking. Just as much, it's about listening."
Mike Shanahan, Head Coach, Washington Redskins

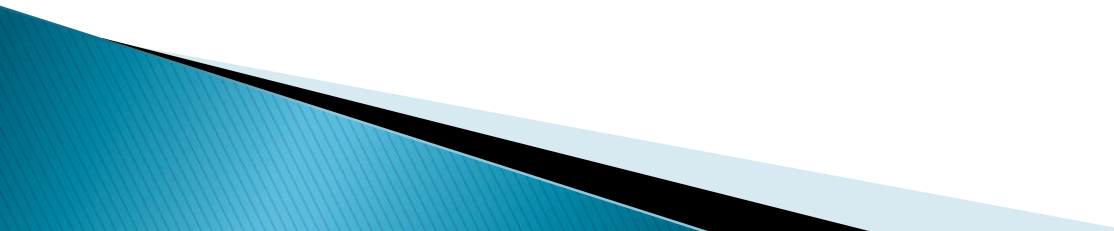
Listen Attentively and Actively

- ▶ Mentally prepare to listen
 - ▶ Make the concerted effort to listen
 - Eye contact
 - Remove distractions
 - ▶ Avoid interrupting
 - ▶ Limit “yes/but” exchanges
 - ▶ Paraphrase and ask questions
 - ▶ Use supportive/confirming behaviors
 - (e.g., “uh-huh”, “okay”, head nod)
- 

Discuss Plans and Give Feedback

- ▶ “Mentor [captains] continually and be closer to them...The more that we can develop that relationship and the more that they can believe that they’re valued and trusted, the better job they’ll do.”
 - Current Michigan High School Coach

Discuss Plans

- ▶ Talk about what the leaders on your team want to do to enhance team chemistry, communication, performance
 - ▶ Invite and facilitate the leaders creating a plan
 - What they will say in team meetings
 - Strategies for overcoming team issues
- 

Give Feedback

- ▶ Help them determine their leadership strengths and areas to improve
- ▶ Provide feedback on their progress as well as on the plans they implement
- ▶ Does not always need to be in front of the team – they often get singled out anyway
 - Being a leader can be lonely!

Commit to a Plan for Teaching Leadership within Your Team

Section 3

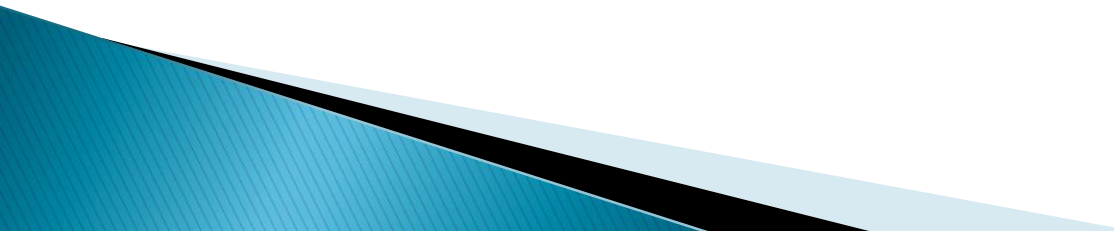


Supporting the Leadership Efforts of Student–Athletes

- ▶ What student–athletes are learning today



Meeting with Student–Athletes

- ▶ Student's Objective: Taking what you learned from today and putting it into action.
 - ▶ Talk with athletes about what they learned.
 - Ask Questions – what will you ask?
 - ▶ Identify ways to support youth's leadership efforts.
 - What things do they think need to be incorporated into your team's plan?
 - How will you present this to your coach?
 - ▶ Review Leadership Profile sheet (especially strategies)
- 

"A good coach will make his players see what they can be rather than what they are."

~Ara Parasheghian, Former Notre Dame football coach

Thank You!

- ▶ Use the tools you have learned to build student leadership in sport and life.
- ▶ What a difference it can make.
- ▶ Questions??

