

**DEVELOPING A TOP TEN PROGRAM**

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**WHAT CONSTITUTES A GOOD COACH**

- He possesses thorough knowledge of fundamental techniques.
- He is a teacher. The most important characteristic of a successful coach is his ability to teach. Games are not won by what a coach thinks he knows; they are won by what his players have learned.
- He is prepared-at meetings, practices, games.
- He is inquisitive, constantly improving his knowledge and teaching methods.
- He has a positive attitude.
- He is a tireless worker willing to devote time to all phases of the program.
- He has a winning attitude and knows what it takes to win. He recognizes a winner by judging a player's performance.
- He pays attention to details. Persistence and perseverance regarding the details makes for a winning program.
- He is willing to assume responsibility for thinking out an assignment and for creatively solving problems.
- He is loyal, honest, and dedicated to the head coach, his fellow coaches and the staff, the school, and the players.
- He does not over-coach. This can take the initiative and instinct out of a player, causing him to be overly cautious.
- He is enthusiastic.
- He is demanding. A good football team is built on good habits and discipline.
- He is self-disciplined. The following will not be tolerated:
  - Drinking during work
  - Drinking with players or in the same establishment as players
  - Use of drugs
  - Receiving a ticket for Driving Under the Influence of alcohol or drugs
  - Dating a member of the athletic department staff or a student

- Cheating or breaking any NCAA rules
- Cursing
- Abusive behavior toward any player
- Gambling
- Dealing with agents
- Abuse of expense accounts, telephones, internet accounts
- Sexual harassment

## **HIRING AND DEVELOPING A TOP-NOTCH STAFF**

- Building a successful program starts with hiring a great staff.
- Hire guys who love to coach.
- Develop great communication among staff members.
- Develop unity as a staff. Team unity will follow.
- Develop well-defined job descriptions for each staff member.
- Assign each coach tasks taking into consideration his areas of strengths and areas of concern.
- Earn the complete trust of your team, staff, and their wives. Get everyone-coaches, their families, staff administration, players-to buy into the program and be positive.

## **BUILDING A UNIFIED STAFF**

- Get to know coaches and their families away from football. Involve the wives with the games and with the team and staff. Reward coaches accomplishments.
- Give coaches enough time to be with their families: be organized. Offer financial seminars for coaches.
- Be loyal to your coaches.
- Plan a preseason staff trip.
- Evaluate coaches semi-annually or annually. Praise coaches publicly, criticize them privately. Always be honest.
- Set short and long-term goals-professional and personal. Be aware of public relations:
  - Staff should attend booster clubs.
  - Staff should be visible in the community and at faculty meetings and school functions.
  - Coaches must have positive attitudes. Anticipate problems and head them off.
- Demonstrate strong character, act with integrity at all times, and always be a role model for your players.
- Emphasize the team, not individuals; use "we" instead of "I."
- Promote unity among offensive, defensive, and special teams coaches.

## **STAFF MEETINGS**

- Be on time. Don't waste other people's time.
- Always bring a calendar, paper and pencil to meetings.
- Keep meetings as short and simple as possible.
- Don't discuss things that don't affect the entire staff. Save one-to-one conversations for later.
- Keep a daily, weekly, yearly schedule in front of your staff. This helps them schedule work and family time.
- Encourage coaches to look ahead. Complete all assignments before the due date.
- Be a good listener, but encourage coaches to answer only if they've researched the question.

## **HOW WE COACH**

- Practice winning every day; demand the best from each player on and off the field.
- Keep your poise on and off the field. Don't argue with coaches or players on the field.
- Be responsible for your player's progress. If one player is performing poorly, re-evaluate him. If your players are playing poorly, reevaluate yourself.
- Be clear on what is important to winning. Not everything can carry the same weight.
- Always treat your players as you would treat your sons.
- Practice simplicity regarding the technical aspects of the game.
- Encourage them to be self-confident; walk with a swagger.
- Never grab your player or his facemask. Never kick him or curse him.
- Never verbally attack your players. Encourage them to do their best. Never encourage a hurt player to practice; defer to the team doctor and the trainer.
- Minimize distractions.
- Play as many players as possible without jeopardizing team's success. Have players learn assignments early in the week; too much coaching the day of the game shows a lack of confidence in yourself and in the players.
- We control our own destiny. We must build better men and be better coaches than our opponents.

## **FIRST PLAYERS' MEETING**

- Emphasize trust: of themselves, their teammates, and coaches.
- Demand clear and honest communication with teammates and coaches.
- Show them how winning will benefit them.
- Let them know you want them to have fun.
- Show them how they can be part of something special.

## **GRADING PLAYERS**

- Be consistent, thorough and fair.
- Grade technique, effort and production separately; give priority to production.
- Allow adequate time for grading; make sure you're alert when grading.
- Share evaluation and comments with players before watching film. Don't share actual grade with player.
- Move players up and down depth chart based on daily performance.
- Play the guys who love to play and who take great pride in their performance.

## **EARNING PLAYERS TRUST**

- Be trustworthy.
- Respect must be reciprocal between coach and player.
- Be committed to excellence.
- Be a good listener. Talk to them about things other than football.
- Make being a member of the team special:
  - Do community service as a team.
  - Attend to details: give them travel shirts, pocket itineraries.
  - Take the team to a movie the night before a game.
  - Give jackets, t-shirts, hats, rings, or highlight films.
  - Have pre-game and victory meals.
  - Make all players learn the words to the fight song.

- Give them educational advantages:
  - Offer study hall, tutors, and rewards for honor roll.
  - Check their class attendance, know their schedule and course load.
  - Communicate with their professors (through the academic counselor only).
- Offer seminars:
  - Major Exploration Night, Career Night
  - Faculty Guest Coach Program
  - Agent Seminar
  - Drug and Alcohol Awareness
  - Sexual Health Seminar
- Emphasize fair discipline.
- Discipline breeds success; harassment breeds contempt.
- Establish leadership committee: the team controls the team, the coaches run the program.
- Have clear team rules:
  - Represent their team with honor at all times.
  - Establish hair and dress code.
  - Be on time.
  - Use proper language.
  - Attend class and keep up grades.
  - Player calls parent if he breaks a rule. Coach determines punishment in cooperation with parents.
- Treat every case individually; keep these matters private.
- Don't punish team for individual discipline problems.
- Treat each player as you would want your son to be treated.
- Have players repeat conversations back to you; make sure he understands what you've told him.

## **PLAYER MEETINGS AND PRE-PRACTICE**

- Be on time for all meetings, stretching, and practice. Meetings will never last more than forty-five minutes. Demand that players sit up and pay attention. Coaches should pay attention to lighting, room temperature, angle to the board.
- Ask players questions to see how much they're understanding and retaining.
- Use pre-practice to emphasize different parts of kicking game daily.
- Use ninja team as the kicking opponents.

## **PRACTICE PREPARATION**

- Mottos: "Practice Winning Every Day." "Do Whatever It Takes."

- Post daily practice schedule. We practice either 24,21, or 18 periods of four or five minutes.
- Be consistent. If you schedule 2 1/2 hours for practice, stay on the field for 2 1/2 hours. This is part of building trust.
- Don't waste time and energy. Do drills that are safe and will help you win. Chart injuries.
- Keep a good practice tempo. Keep all players involved and working as much as possible.
- Teach in meetings, pre-practice, and individual periods, not at practice. Each player should know his assignments so he can have quality repetitions during practice.
- Always practice at full speed, but have a "fit, wrap, and strip" mentality. Only take people to the ground on 24 goal line plays.
- Injuries are more likely with pile-ups.
- Use a lot of fundamental drills.

## **WEEKLY PRACTICE SCHEDULE**

### **SUNDAY:**

- Watch game film
- No individual awards, only team goals
- Show highlight film of plays that made a difference
- Trainers Check
- Coaches go home on Sunday nights

### **MONDAY:**

- Players are off
  - Coaches work from 7:00 A.M.-5:30 P.M.
  - Offensive coaches might stay until 9:30 P.M.
  - Defensive coaches go home
- (Offense takes more preparation time than defense.)

### **TUESDAY:**

- Staff schedule same as Monday
- 2 1/2 hour practice - full pads
- 45 minute meeting

### **WEDNESDAY:**

- Staff schedule same as Tuesday
- 2 hour practice - shells
- 45 minute meeting

### **THURSDAY:**

- Staff arrives at 7:00A.M.
- 2 hour practice - shorts
- 45 minute meeting
- Staff goes home after practice

**FRIDAY:**

-30 minute practice is optional. Be brief but organized.  
We want fresh players and coaches for the game.

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## **HOW TO PREPARE TEAM FOR A GAME OR A SEASON**

- Be honest about season or upcoming game.
- Have a theme for the season and for each week.
- Set and break down the season's/game's goals.
- Do little things to help motivate team: t-shirts, dedicate games to someone they love, invite former players to talk, rely on tradition.
- Emphasize that they must be good every day in order to become great.
- Have players visualize themselves winning the game. They should actually see the celebration and press conferences.
- Handling Big Wins: Act as if you expected to win. Let the team enjoy the victory. We have a victory meal after all wins. Have three distinct things to say to the media. Be prepared; don't ramble. On Sunday review the game, then drop it and move forward. Don't mention it again.
- Handling Tough Losses: Be brief after the game, but be honest. Study film as a team, review checklist of objectives. Discover why we lost and how we can improve. Then, drop that game and move forward. Teach players how to turn negatives into positives.
- Plan to win and expect to win. Keep it simple. Don't coach in pregame. Be confident and positive. Make all decisions possible during the week e.g. what play to run on 3rd and 4, etc.
- Make all players and coaches feel important. Let them know exactly what you expect of them.

## **HOW WE WIN**

- Have a burning desire to win.
- Each practice should be intense. Get better every day.
- Play with confidence. Field a team that expects to win every game.
- Keep your poise after a bad break. Be strong enough to change momentum.
- On offense, score every time we're inside the 20. Get points on every drive.
- On defense, lead the nation in scoring defense. Don't allow long passes or runs for touchdowns.

-Kicking game must be organized and fundamentally sound. Allow no more than 20 yards per kickoff return. Allow no more than 2.5 yards on punt returns.

-Kicks, punts, and snaps must be consistently good. Don't quick kick or punt if snap is juggled on 1st, 2nd, or 3rd down. Be excellent fundamentally: blocking, tackling, kicking, punting, catching, throwing.

-Don't beat ourselves. Force turnovers, don't commit them. Make the big play, don't give it up. Play great field position football and great goal line football. Have a great kicking game.

-Know our assignments. Make no mental mistakes.

-Eliminate penalties.

-Be in top-notch physical condition.

-Physically dominate your opponent.

-Pursue your opponent relentlessly and gang tackle aggressively.

-Play guys who get results. Potential means "ain't done it yet."

-Take away your opponents best plays and players. Take away their strengths.

**Summary:**

- Eliminate mistakes
- Have superior mental toughness
- Have superior physical preparedness
- Win the explosive plays
- Win on the goal line