

Becoming a
TEAM LEADER

A Workbook for the
Student-Athlete



THE ACADEMY FOR SPORT LEADERSHIP

Cory L. Dobbs, Ed.D.

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*“Sports can do so much. It’s given me confidence,
self-esteem, discipline, and motivation.”*

– Mia Hamm

“Great leaders aren’t born; they’re made.”

– Vince Lombardi

“Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.”

– John F. Kennedy

*“Our society places such a high premium on individual achievement, it’s easy
for players to get blinded by their own self-importance and lose a sense
of interconnectedness, the essence of teamwork.”*

– Phil Jackson, Sacred Hoops

Foreword

Years ago as a young student-athlete desiring to be a team leader I had nowhere to turn to learn how to become a leader. After high school I joined the United States Army where I began *learning* how to lead. You see, the military is in the business of developing leaders. Through programs, processes, and experience you are expected to learn how to lead. It was here that I began to sow the seeds of ***Becoming a Team Leader***.

This workbook is for the student-athlete searching for a way to take that first step and begin the journey of becoming a leader. Whether you’re playing in the youth leagues, high school or college, leadership is a worthwhile experience. Your role as a team leader provides the opportunity to explore leadership experiences and to expand your leadership skills and abilities.

I encourage you to take the challenge of becoming a team leader. Read this book and complete all of the exercises, assessments, and discussion questions. Leadership is a set of skills and behaviors learned through practicing and applying the concepts and skills you’ll find in this workbook.

There are no shortcuts to becoming a leader. This workbook will get you started on your journey, but it won’t be enough. However, it is a place to start learning how to lead and a good first step toward becoming a team leader.

Cory Dobbs

CHAPTER 1

THE PERSONAL SIDE OF TEAM LEADERSHIP

“In your preparation to take on the task of helping others enlarge themselves, the first thing you need to do is to improve and enlarge yourself because only when you are growing and enlarging yourself are you able to help others do the same.”

–John Maxwell

Taking part in team sports can be an exciting, rewarding and developmental experience. Participation in sports offers you an opportunity to learn some of life’s greatest lessons. Competition, discipline, cooperation, and communication are just a few of the fundamental principles you’ll encounter in athletic participation. You’ll learn how to monitor and adjust your actions and attitudes to maximize individual and team performance. And you’ll make some of the best friends you can imagine. Involvement in team sports offers a wide-ranging package of experiences.

One element of sports participation many young people avoid or learn little from is leadership. Many are chosen to lead, but few truly learn all that is possible from the experience. Leadership is an exciting aspect of sports. If you are selected for a leadership role, or if you indirectly assume a leadership role, you’ll greatly enhance your life skills.

Team Leader vs. Performance Leader

It’s important for student-athletes to recognize that *team leadership* is different from *performance leadership*. A performance leader is an individual athlete that excels at his or her sport demonstrating competence and mastery of the sport specific skills. It is essential to understand that simply excelling at a sport does not make that athlete a leader. Too often this causes confusion among young athletes. Many athletes assume that the performance leader is the most capable person to be a team leader. This assumption is incorrect and often serves to discourage or undermine the leadership efforts of very capable and willing non-star athletes.

Many coaches acknowledge that excellence on the field of play, while certainly important to the success of the team, does not mean that the best player is the best fit for the team leadership role. A team leader is an individual willing and able to contribute in a wide-range of ways to the success of the team—on and off the field of play. The performance leader on the other hand, may or may not be totally committed to his or her teammates and may, at times, place individual success ahead of team success. An important starting point for young leaders is to recognize that the most gifted or talented player may not be the most capable leader. Leadership skills are different than sport skills.

A high-performing team leader is the student-athlete ready to do whatever it takes to nurture team member relationships and works hard to create a cohesive team. A positive and encouraging team environment lends itself to an exciting and meaningful place for student-athletes to challenge themselves, getting the most from their individual and collective talents. A true team leader is willing to “set the example.” He or she looks out for the well being of teammates. The true team leader performs in the locker room, off the field, in the classroom, and in any way possible that will contribute to the success of the team. Team leaders accept responsibility for contributing in many different ways to the team’s success.

Self-Leadership

The effective team leader recognizes the need to be able to lead one’s self before ever leading a teammate. This is called self-leadership. The leader appreciates that his or her teammates will not follow if he or she is not able to demonstrate self-leadership. Winning team leaders are always seeking ways to improve themselves and others. Whether on the playing field or in the locker room, leaders are willing to walk ahead.

Visual and Vocal Leadership

Team leaders use two primary approaches to leading teammates. These methods are actions and words. To be effective you’ll need to lead through visual demonstrations and through vocalizing commands, questions, insights, and words of encouragement. Team leadership will involve explaining things to teammates and coaches. Vocal leadership is a challenge for many young leaders. Trying to find “your voice” with your teammates will require patience and practice. The best team leaders integrate the vocal aspects of leading with the visual actions of leadership. When team leaders learn to effectively combine actions and words they create a commanding leadership model.

A word of caution, don’t get caught up in listening to professional athletes talk about how they lead. Over many year’s I’ve noticed most professional athletes default to leadership by “example.” Leading by example, while certainly one way to provide leadership, is only a small aspect of effective leadership. Professional athletes say this primarily because they aren’t willing to lead by using their voice. If all you do is lead by example, you won’t be the leader you

can be by integrating the visual aspects with the vocal aspects of team leadership. Learn to vocalize your leadership. Work hard to become a complete leader.

Trust, Respect and Confidence

Trust, respect, and confidence are key characteristics of team leaders. To be effective, team leaders need to have the respect of their peers. Team members need to trust their team leader. Peer leadership is perhaps the most difficult type of leadership. Leading your peers will be awkward at first, for you and for your teammates. However, given time and commitment to developing your leadership talent, most teammates will be willing to follow your lead.

As a team leader you'll need to display an authentic confidence in your coaches and teammates. To receive confidence from your teammates, you'll need to instill in them the confidence that you are trustworthy and capable of leading. The effective team leader behaves in a way that motivates his or her teammates, inspiring trust and respect, leading to confidence in their leadership capabilities.

Leading Your Team

The product of your leadership will be a result of your character and your commitment to serving your team. Leadership is everything you do that affects the mission of your team. If you want to be a team leader you'll need to give attention to *who you are* (your attitude, values, and beliefs), *your knowledge of team leadership* (human behavior, communication, and team goals), and *what you do* (feedback you provide to teammates, example you set, dedication to the team).

Team leaders must display high levels of integrity, courage, and discipline. Think of the best leaders in history—they were men and women of character. Each day brings with it many opportunities to make choices that demonstrate your values and morals. Your teammates will see the way you think, act, and treat others. Leaders respect the goals of the team and invest themselves in others. When adversity comes, and it will, your character will help you to ride out the storm. Being a team leader is a privilege.

continued

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Briefly discuss your personal experience with performance leaders who were poor team leaders.
2. Why do you think they were poor team leaders?
3. What two or three things might they have done to contribute more to the team as a team leader?
4. What do you consider to be your strengths and weaknesses as a team leader? Discuss the dimensions mentioned in the chapter (*Self-Leadership, Mental Models, Team Leader vs. Performance Leader, Trust, Respect, and Confidence*).

CHAPTER 2

LEADING YOUR TEAM

“Hard work and togetherness. They go hand in hand. You need the hard work because it’s such a tough atmosphere...to win week in and week out. You need togetherness because you don’t always win, and you gotta hang tough together.”

–Tony Dungy

Leadership Must be Learned

People aren’t born leaders—they are made! Good leaders develop through a never-ending process of learning and leading. Good leaders travel a path of self-study, education, training, and experience. If you have the desire and the courage, you can become an effective team leader. This workbook will help you begin the process of developing into an effective team leader. The best leaders accept the role and responsibilities of team leadership and embrace the path of leadership development.

Leadership Opportunities are Plentiful

If you are selected for, or desire, a leadership role you’ll quickly identify the overflowing opportunities to lead on a daily basis. You’ll find ways to lead in the classroom, the locker room, the practice field and at home. Each day, each practice, each game, presents challenges in which you’ll provide leadership. Team leadership is a way of thinking and acting—a way of being. As a team leader you’ll provide leadership through your conduct, attitude and the way you think. *Leadership will be visible in your every action.*

Let’s define leadership. Leadership is a complex process by which a person influences others to accomplish a goal, mission, objective, or a particular task.

Leadership is a *social process* in that it requires a group of people to accomplish stated goals and objectives. Leaders passionately provide direction and serve as a connection between the coaching staff and team members.

Why Team Leadership?

As a player, you’re looking to make an impact on your team. You have basically two ways to contribute to the team. You can contribute, (1) your on the field

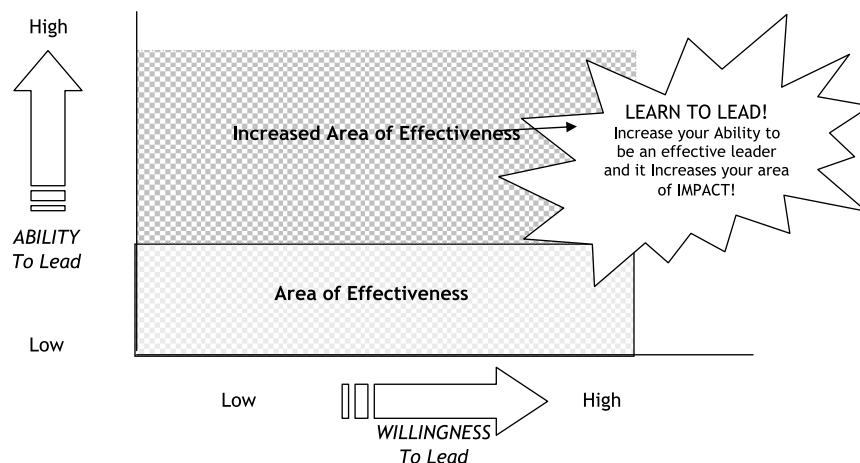
playing skills and (2) your attitude and interactions with your teammates and coaches (the teambuilding process). Most players work very hard at developing the skills necessary to compete at a very high level. Unfortunately, many student-athletes neglect the opportunity to increase their impact on the team by providing leadership. Team leaders are key factors for a successful team experience.

Leadership Effectiveness

You can become an effective leader through constant and never-ending practice. Student-athlete team leaders contribute greatly to the team’s success. Simply being motivated to lead is not enough. You must add your leadership abilities to the mix. Effective leaders combine willingness and ability to develop individual leadership capabilities.

Figure 1 below points out how these two—willingness and ability—work in concert to increase a leader’s effectiveness. This workbook is designed to help you, the student-athlete, become a team leader. If your goal is to become a leader you’ll benefit from your investment in this workbook. Invest your time, your energy, and your soul. All great teams have great team leaders.

Figure 1 Willingness and Ability and its Increasing Impact through Leadership



Maximize Your Contribution

This workbook is designed to help you learn to lead. Your effectiveness as a leader of student-athletes is determined by your willingness to lead—and your ability to lead. Many a young student-athlete is highly motivated to be a team leader, yet they “know” very little about leadership. And those with leadership capabilities often times lack the willingness and courage to tackle the challenges of leading one’s peers.

If your goal is a championship season, team leadership is a necessity. If your goal is to maximize your contribution through leading, you’ll need to enlarge your willingness and increase your abilities. Team leadership is truly an educational experience. Take serious your leadership opportunity and you’ll reap the benefits.

Leadership Exercise

Understanding the Leadership Context

To lead effectively you'll benefit by understanding the setting in which you will perform as a team leader. To do this it is necessary for you to talk with your head coach and if possible the entire coaching staff. Additionally, it's a good idea to get to "know" your teammates.

To help you gain insight into the team values and goals make an appointment to interview your coach. The questions below will help guide your exploratory conversation. Take time to engage in a conversation with each of your teammates too.

Team Values

- What are the top five values you advocate for our team?
- What expectations do you have of team leaders?
- What are your expectations for me as a team leader?
- What standards will you hold me accountable for every day?
- What one or two things would you advise me to do immediately?
- How often will you provide me performance feedback? Progress feedback?

Team Goals

- What goals do you have for our team?
- What role do you see me playing in our team goals?
- How can I communicate our goals to my teammates?

Coaching Staff Profile

Getting to know your coaches is very important and will help you become an effective team leader. Schedule about 15-20 minutes to discuss their coaching background and their top values. Use this profile format to create a profile page of all coaches in your program for your portfolio.

Coach:

Coaching Background: (number of years coaching, sports coached, and other related information)

Leadership Values:

Favorite Leaders:

Team Member Profile

Getting to know your teammates is very important and will help you become an effective team leader. Schedule about 15-20 minutes to discuss their athletic background and their values. Use this profile format to create profile pages for all teammates and place in your portfolio.

Name:

Year: Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior

Athletic Background: (total number of years playing sport, other sports in which they've participated)

Values:

What motivates this teammate?

What are some short-term goals? Long-term goals?

Chapter 3

THE HEART AND MIND OF THE TEAM LEADER

Courage, Character, Commitment, Contribution

“No Excuse, sir.” “No Excuse, ma’am.” The two most important sentences at the United States Military Academy.

–West Point

Leadership is an *educational decision*. If you truly desire a leadership role you’ll need to make a commitment to understanding what leadership is and working to constantly improve your capabilities as a team leader. Becoming a leader does not mean paying lip service to the role and responsibilities of team leadership. The desire to lead demands that you embrace the process of becoming a leader and are willing to put the welfare of the team ahead of your own personal agenda. For this reason alone many young athletes will not aspire to a team leadership position.

Because most athletes will choose not to become team leaders, those that do must possess a great deal of courage. **Courage** is necessary to withstand challenges to your role as a leader. Peer leadership is difficult. At times it will be necessary to distance yourself from your friends. Leadership requires you make good choices and use sound judgment. Teammates will question your skills and abilities as a leader and at times will challenge the direction you are attempting to set. Some teammates will praise you while others will criticize you. The successful leader is able to withstand the criticism, to learn from it, and become an even better leader.

The challenges of team leadership might initially create a sense of self-doubt and seem confusing in the early stages of learning to lead. For many new leaders the challenges of becoming a leader and practicing leadership skills will be awkward and uncomfortable. The process of stepping outside your comfort zone is necessary for growth and development as a leader. Any time you step out of our comfort zone you’re likely to experience some fear, frustration, and disorder. But for

those who have the courage to become a leader, remain steadfast in your commitment and understand that you are in a sense, developing a new you.

The Josephson Institute of Ethics suggests that authentic leadership requires the leader possess character which is “enduring and indispensable” to leadership practice. The Institute highlights what they consider to be the “Six Pillars of Character.” The six pillars of **Character** are trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. As a student-athlete leader these six traits of a high-character leader are the fundamental building blocks for all you do. Integrity in relationships is central to leading and building a cohesive team. Your character should be evident in every action.

The decision to become a team leader requires a high level of devotion to the role and **Commitment** to growing in the role. A starting point is learning what a leader does and what a leader must know and be. When you take the role of a leader you need to *become a leader*. As a leader hold yourself to a high standard of character and always work to build bonds of trust and respect with your teammates and coaching staff.

Ultimately, it comes down to this. You have to be willing to make the sacrifices that will enable you to provide leadership and be willing to learn from your leadership experiences. If you aren’t willing to accept the responsibilities of team leadership—don’t become a team leader. If you want to make the commitment—then get after it and begin learning to lead.

A leader is expected to make an extraordinary **Contribution** to the team. As a team leader dedicate yourself to the goals and objectives of the team and help your teammates reach their full potential. If your production level as a player on the field falls off or you find yourself in a slump, this cannot affect your dedication as a leader. Your role as a leader will provide ample opportunity to make many contributions to the team. Being a team leader requires devotion, dedication, work ethic, and commitment to team success.

Team leaders make a difference. Your contributions will emerge through your work ethic, habits, desire, drive and attitude. Your courage will be recognized by coaches and your teammates. Your credibility will grow as you develop your leadership skills. And your confidence will transfer to your teammates—making the team better.

Leadership is not easy. Those that accept the challenge and learn to become leaders will be rewarded in a variety of ways throughout their life. *Prepare yourself for the challenge.*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Exploring the First Phase of Learning to Lead

1. What fears do you have before beginning your role as a team leader?
2. What comments from past teammates instill in you confidence about being a team leader?
3. What risks do you anticipate? How do you think you'll respond to these risks?
4. What do you anticipate being your first challenge as a team leader?

continued

5. What new experiences do you look forward to as a team leader?

6. What rewards (short-term and long-term) do you expect as a result of your leadership?

If you're leading, someone's following.

What type of leadership style do student-athletes prefer from their team leaders? It depends. Peer leadership is often a difficult proposition since one's teammates are generally the same age and have often shared similar experiences. However, there are some basics that will help you to be an effective leader on and off the playing field.

Although numerous definitions of leadership exist, it is broadly defined as a behavioral process in which a team leader influences others to pursue a shared purpose and common goals. Thus inherent in the position of team leader, formal or informal, are certain types of social and relational responsibilities.

Followers want to be:

Accepted
Connected
Trusted
Cared about
Supported

Followers don't want to be:

Rejected
Disconnected
Judged
Neglected
Not recognized

To have good followers leaders have a duty to create a leader-follower relationship that engages team members and treats them as individuals rather than as passive sheep expected to blindly follow. Followers want to be a part of the team and expect you to give them social support, situational advisement, instruction, positive feedback, and to listen when they want you to hear what they have to say.

The following seven characteristics will help you Be a credible leader, Know what followers want, and Do leadership actions that followers expect.

1. Predictability

No surprises. Your actions and reactions should be consistent. You can do a self-check by asking, "Is my behavior predictable or erratic?"

2. Congruity

Walk your talk. Be consistent with your messages and actions. You can do a self-check by asking, "Do I communicate clearly or carelessly?"

3. Reliability

Can your teammates depend on you daily? Will you help them whenever possible? Your teammates will be asking, "Can I trust you?" You can do a self-check by asking, "Am I straightforward or do I tend to shade the truth to protect me or make me look good?"

4. Openness

Be truthful and share your opinions and feelings. Be willing to monitor and adjust your opinions to achieve desired results. Other players will only be

open to you if you demonstrate openness to them. You can do a self-check by asking, “Do I treat promises seriously or lightly?”

5. Acceptance

In athletics you’ll encounter players of diverse backgrounds and of varying levels of talent. Treating each player with dignity will go a long way. You can do a self-check by asking, “Do I value each player on the team?”

6. Sensitivity

Each team member will have his or her own set of needs, wants, and goals. To be sensitive you need to be aware of your teammates and what they consider important. You can do a self-check by asking, “Am I developing personal relationships with my teammates?”

7. Competence

Credibility is the result of your ability to meet your teammates’ expectations. Are you personally working to enlarge your capabilities? You can do a self-check by asking, “Am I committed to the values and standards of the program.”

Point to Ponder

To have good followers leaders have a duty to create a leader-follower relationship that engages team members and treats them as individuals rather than as passive sheep expected to blindly follow you. Why is it your responsibility to create the leader-follower relationship?

Chapter 4

EXPLORING THE ROOTS OF THE STUDENT-ATHLETE LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

“All people have untapped leadership potential, just as all people have untapped athletic potential. With coaching and practice, we can all get much better at it.”

—Noel Tichy, *The Leadership Engine*

Getting Started

A good place to start your leadership journey is by examining the mental models you currently hold in your mind. Mental models are images, ideas, assumptions, emotions, and stories you carry in your mind that provide you a “view” of how the world works. Mental models shape your thoughts and behaviors. By understanding how you’ve organized your current perception of team leadership you’ll “see” your starting point for leadership development.

The first exercise is *Exploring Your Mental Models*. By identifying individuals that have influenced your perception and point of view of team leadership you will be better positioned to examine how those images and assumptions are either enabling or limiting factors in your development. We all have mental models and utilize them when making decisions and creating meaning. For example, based on your experience in the library at your school you have expectations on how you should behave in this environment. When you walk into the library your mental model guides your behavior—that is it informs you to talk at a low volume. It’s vitally important to uncover your team leadership mental models.

Many young team leaders simply lead the same way they’ve seen other’s lead. The tendency is to “copy” the things previous leaders have done, to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with a leadership “model.” If you’ve been on teams where the team leader was a leader “by example,” then it’s likely that this experience has helped you to construct the outlook that a team leader leads by example. This is a good starting point and it might serve you well getting your

feet wet as a leader. However, you'll quickly realize that you can enlarge your leadership capabilities by going beyond your current mental models. One of your first leadership tasks is to enhance your mental model of team leadership.

This first exercise is to help you set the foundation of your leadership development. The questions will help you uncover some of the factors that have influenced your understanding of team leadership. This self-administered exercise will provide you insight into your team leadership mental models.

Let's get started!

Exercise 1

Exploring Mental Models

Mental models are deeply held images in our mind of how the world works, images that can enable or limit us to familiar ways of thinking and acting. To become a more effective leader you'll need to identify your existing mental models, examine them, test them, and then learn how to enhance or change them.

1. Think for a moment about your playing career, at all levels, and identify the two or three players that stand out in your mind because of their leadership skills and abilities. Write down their names.

2. List the characteristics that made these players effective leaders.

3. Now, list two to three coaches or teachers that stand out in your mind because of their leadership skills and abilities. Write down their names.

4. List the characteristics that made these coaches effective leaders.

5. Reflect on a personal successful leadership experience. Describe it.

When did this leadership experience take place?

What motivated you to assume this leadership role?

What risks did you take?

What did you do that made you effective in this role as a leader?

6. Do you feel a sense of responsibility to your teammates? Describe why you feel responsible.
7. Can you take some of the best characteristics you mentioned above and use them to help you become a better team leader? List the ones you think will help you the most.
8. Do you feel you can add to this list of characteristics as you grow as a leader?

continued

9. How can the example you set as a leader this year affect future team leaders?

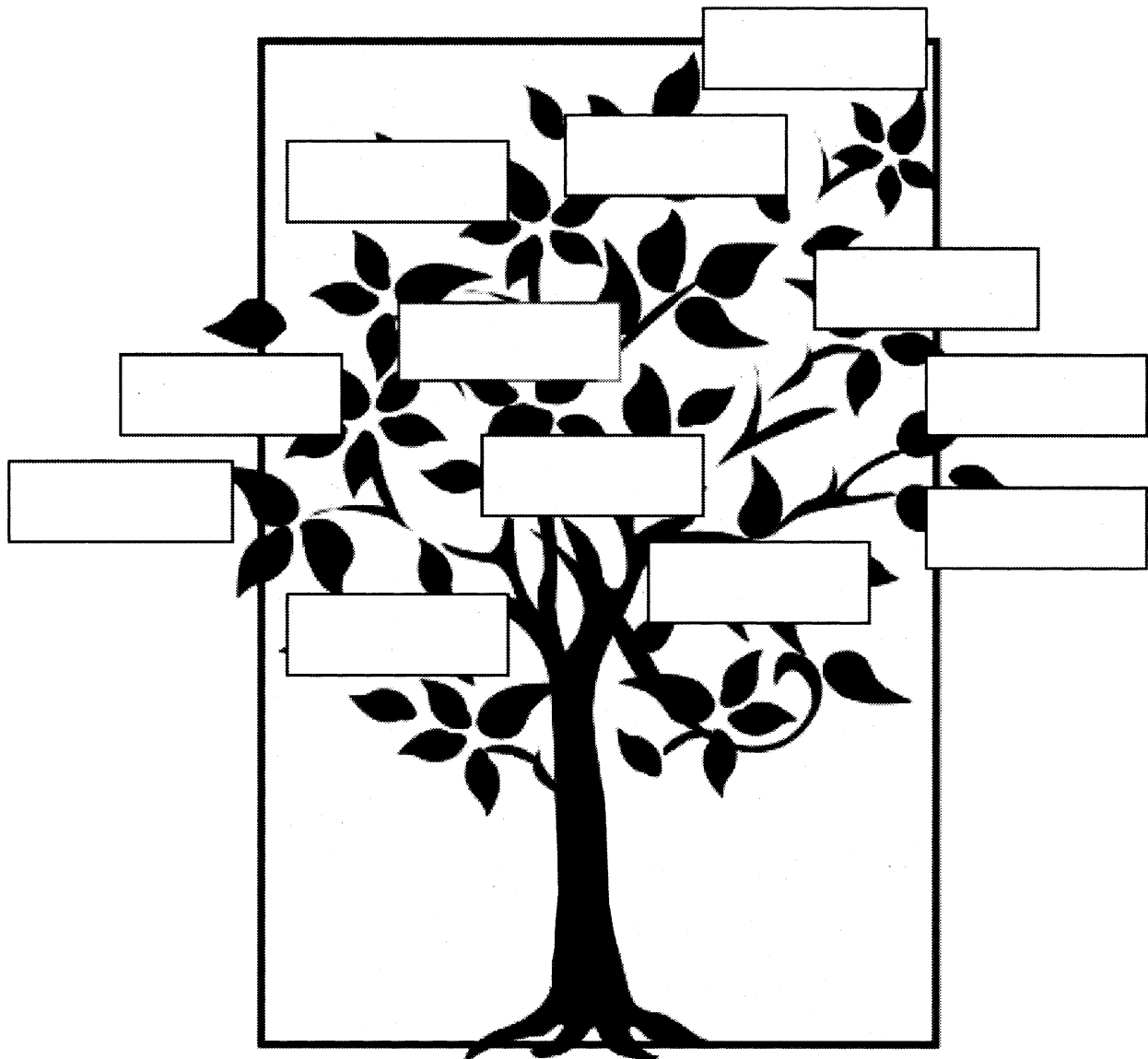
The Roots of Your Leadership Mental Model

Instructions – In the boxes on the tree (Figure 2) place the names of the people that have been models of leadership in your life. Place the names in the box that best represents the level of influence the person has had on shaping your perspective of leadership.

Bottom Boxes = Somewhat Influential

Middle Boxes = Moderately Influential

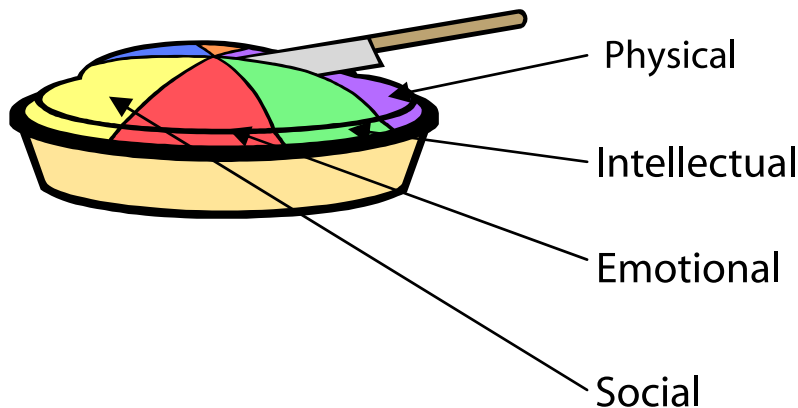
Top Boxes = Very Influential



TEAM LEADER DEVELOPMENT PLAN

THE FOUR DIMENSIONS OF TEAM LEADERSHIP

*"I'm a firm believer in goal setting. Step by step.
I can't see any other way of accomplishing anything."
—Michael Jordan*



1st Dimension: Physical Leadership

The physical dimension of team leadership combines your capabilities to perform the technical aspects of your sport, the physical fitness elements, and the empowerment and motivation of team members. Leading in the physical dimension requires you to willingly lead and energize teammates in learning to be self-disciplined for competitive toughness.

2nd Dimension: Intellectual Leadership

Leadership in the intellectual dimension requires you to dedicate time to learning the intricacies of your sport. This includes knowing the rules of your sport, understanding game strategy, the ability to perform and teach the mechanics of the sport, and insight into the mental aspects of athletic performance.

3rd Dimension: Emotional Leadership

The emotionally intelligent student-athlete is aware of how his or her emotions affect their attitude and behavior. Emotionally intelligent people understand how the emotions and emotional moods, both positive and negative, of other team members affect team performance. To lead your team in the area of emotional leadership means you'll need to make use of your emotions and those of other team members in a productive way on and off the field of play.

4th Dimension: Social Leadership

To lead in social dimension of team leadership requires you to work hard to build relationships among all team members. The cohesion of the group is an important factor in all high-performing teams. The socially intelligent team leader is creative in finding ways to foster positive relationships among team members. In a competitive athletic environment teammates can easily pull apart and disengage from one another. The savvy social leader will find ways to augment the collaboration and cooperation among his or her teammates.

Skill Dimension: Physical Leadership

Players Skilled in Physical Leadership are:

- Capable of performing the technical aspects of the sport.
- Able to energize self and teammates.
- Willing to dedicate the time necessary to improve physical skills.
- Disciplined in setting and meeting individual and team physical goals.
- Understands physical strengths, weaknesses, and limitations.
- Able to increase speed, strength, stamina, and flexibility.
- Willing to lead teammates in physical improvement activities.
- Able to cope with stress and fatigue.
- Capable of motivating and energizing teammates.
- Able to recognize when fatigue is limiting performance.

Six Steps to Developing Your Personalized Leadership Development Plan

See page 23 to complete the steps below.

Step 1

Perform a self-assessment of your physical leadership skills using the **Physical Leadership Inventory**. Be honest with yourself when rating your current skill level. Self-assessments are often difficult for student-athletes. Do your best and be willing to acknowledge weaknesses as well as strengths.

Step 2

Identify several items from your inventory for improvement. The areas you select don't need to be those with the lowest rating on your inventory. You might find that improving on a higher rated area will help you in becoming a more effective leader. List on your **Leadership Development Plan (LDP)** under *Section I: Areas for Improvement*.

Step 3

In *Section II: Personal Action Items* on your LDP describe strategies for improving in the areas listed in Section I. Be specific. You might want to first prepare a rough draft and then finalize your personal action plan on your LDP. To develop an effective set of strategies it is recommended you sit down and discuss this section with your coach or leadership support person.

Step 4

In *Section III* Describe the results or outcomes you anticipate as you develop your leadership skills. Be specific.

Step 5

In *Section IV* Identify a person to provide you support and feedback regarding your plan for improvement. Set up a schedule to meet with this person on a regular basis to discuss progress on your LDP. Ask your support person to provide you constructive feedback on your leadership performance.

Step 6

Assess your improvement on a regular basis. Be disciplined in the self-assessment process by recording a new score for each inventory item on a regular schedule. Your success and achievement as a leader will be documented here!

Physical Leadership Inventory

5 = Always 4 = Most of the Time 3 = Some of the Time 2 = Rarely 1 = Never

		1 st Assessment	2 nd Assessment	3 rd Assessment	4 th Assessment
Date of Assessment:					
<i>Doing assessments at 3 week intervals will help you to improve as a team leader.</i>					
1	I am actively involved in off-season conditioning programs.				
2	In the weight room, I use my time wisely and set an example for my teammates.				
3	I energize my teammates during physical workouts.				
4	I am able to cope with the stress and fatigue from working out.				
5	I work on proper technique development when working out.				
6	I practice good nutritional habits.				
7	I schedule the appropriate amount of time to improve my physical skills and abilities.				
8	I work with teammates to improve their physical skills.				
9	I work on the techniques of my position and the skills of my sport.				
10	I work to improve my flexibility.				
11	I work to improve my endurance.				
12	I work to improve my strength.				
13	I provide feedback to teammates on their physical improvement.				
14	I know which teammates need assistance in overcoming fatigue.				
15	I schedule the proper amount of rest to recover from fatigue.				
16	I am able to recognize when fatigue is limiting my performance.				
17	I am willing to lead a drill or a demonstration in practice.				
18	I am able to push and encourage my teammates to sustain a high level of physical performance over an entire practice or game.				
19	I understand the need for mental preparation prior to physical activities.				
20	I encourage teammates verbally and physically.				
21	I communicate through positive body language.				
22	I compete on the field of play in a physical manner.				
23	I help teammates exert energy during practice and competition.				
24	I work to develop accuracy and quickness in fundamentals.				
25	I understand my physical limitations.				
Self-Assessments are Fundamental to Enhancing Self-Awareness					

Your Personalized Leadership Development Plan (LDP): Physical Dimension

Examine your leadership skills inventory on the previous page and determine the areas you need to improve to enhance your leadership skills and abilities.

I. Areas for Improvement

I need to improve: *(example: my understanding of teammates' strengths, weaknesses and limitations.)*

II. Personal Action Items

Strategies to address the areas for improvement:

(Example: I will observe my teammates during workouts, consult with coaches and help my teammates improve their strength, speed, stamina and endurance.)

I will _____

I will _____

I will _____

I will _____

III. Anticipated Outcomes

Anticipated results from improving my Physical Dimension leadership skills:

(Example: I anticipate helping those teammates that lack stamina and endurance.)

I anticipate _____

I anticipate _____

I anticipate _____

IV. Support

A person who might serve as a mentor, coach, or peer leader when working to improve my Physical Dimension leadership skills is: _____

Skill Dimension: Intellectual Leadership

Players Skilled in Intellectual Leadership are:

- Able to understand game strategy and implement in competitive play.
- Able to understand offensive and defensive systems.
- Capable of teaching fundamental skills to younger players.
- Able to interpret rules of the game.
- Able to understand and implement strength and conditioning principles.
- Able to perform player evaluation.
- Able to instruct teammates on mechanics and principles of instructional drills.
- Willing to evaluate game play on video tape.
- Willing to invest time learning the intellectual aspects of the sport.
- Able to understand different learning styles of teammates.

Six Steps to Developing Your Personalized Leadership Development Plan

See page 27 to complete the steps below.

Step 1

Perform a self-assessment of your physical leadership skills using the **Intellectual Leadership Inventory**. Be honest with yourself when rating your current skill level. Self-assessments are often difficult for student-athletes. Do your best and be willing to acknowledge weaknesses as well as strengths.

Step 2

Identify several items from your inventory for improvement. The areas you select don't need to be those with the lowest rating on your inventory. You might find that improving on a higher rated area will help you in becoming a more effective leader. List on your **Leadership Development Plan (LDP)** under *Section I: Areas for Improvement*.

Step 3

In *Section II: Personal Action Items* on your LDP describe strategies for improving in the areas listed in Section I. Be specific. You might want to first prepare a rough draft and then finalize your personal action plan on your LDP. To develop an effective set of strategies it is recommended you sit down and discuss this section with your coach or leadership support person.

Step 4

In *Section III* Describe the results or outcomes you anticipate as you develop your leadership skills. Be specific.

Step 5

In *Section IV* Identify a person to provide you support and feedback regarding your plan for improvement. Set up a schedule to meet with this person on a regular basis to discuss progress on your LDP. Ask your support person to provide you constructive feedback on your leadership performance.

Step 6

Assess your improvement on a regular basis. Be disciplined in the self-assessment process by recording a new score for each inventory item on a regular schedule. Your success and achievement as a leader will be documented here!

Intellectual Leadership Inventory

5 = Always 4 = Most of the Time 3 = Some of the Time 2 = Rarely 1 = Never
 *5 = Excellent *4 = Advanced *3 = Adequate *2 = Poor *1 = Very Poor

		1 st Assessment	2 nd Assessment	3 rd Assessment	4 th Assessment
Date of Assessment:					
<i>Doing assessments at 3 week intervals will help you to improve as a team leader.</i>					
1	I understand offensive strategy of my sport. *				
2	I understand defensive strategy of my sport. *				
3	I am comfortable teaching the fundamental skills of my position				
4	I am able to evaluate game play on video tape. *				
5	I demonstrate knowledge of the rules of the game. *				
6	I understand how to establish and maintain effective relationships. *				
7	I consistently set challenging goals.				
8	I am a good listener.				
9	I work cooperatively in team situations.				
10	I help keep teammates focused on team goals.				
11	I support the standards set by the coaching staff.				
12	I understand the tactics of game strategy. *				
13	I understand the objectives of specific drills. *				
14	I lead productive team discussions.				
15	I am able to give clear and actionable directions.				
16	I am effective at instructing teammates on the mechanics of instructional drills. *				
17	I understand group dynamics. *				
18	I understand the importance of self-confidence. *				
19	I apply experience of prior situations whenever possible.				
20	I maintain emotional balance and control.				
21	I exhibit confidence in others.				
22	I understand the qualities of an effective team leader. *				
23	I understand the roles and responsibilities of a team leader. *				
24	I am able to integrate learning quickly.				
25	I consider all relevant choices before making decisions.				
<i>* Assessments noted with an asterisk should be evaluated using: Excellent, Advanced, Adequate, Poor & Very Poor</i>					
Self-Assessments are Fundamental to Enhancing Self-Awareness					

Your Personalized Leadership Development Plan (LDP): Intellectual Dimension

Examine your self-assessment skills inventory on the previous page and determine the areas you need to improve to enhance your leadership in the *Intellectual Dimension*. The best team leaders understand and value the social aspects of sports—on the field, off the field, in season and during the off-season.

I. Areas for Improvement

I need to improve: *(example: my ability to teach fundamental skills to younger players.)*

II. Personal Action Items

Strategies to address the areas for improvement:

(Example: I will work as a counselor at summer camps for younger kids.)

I will _____

I will _____

I will _____

I will _____

III. Anticipated Outcomes

Anticipated results from improving my Intellectual Dimension leadership skills:

(Example: I anticipate improving my understanding of the mechanics of ball handling.)

I anticipate _____

I anticipate _____

I anticipate _____

IV. Support

A person who might serve as a mentor, coach, or peer leader when working to improve my *Intellectual Dimension* leadership skills is: _____

Skill Dimension: Emotional Intelligence Leadership

Players Skilled in Emotional Intelligence Leadership are:

- Capable of controlling impulses.
- Able to delay gratification.
- Able to sense their own emotions and act appropriately.
- Able to sense the emotional state of a teammate and respond accordingly.
- Capable of understanding the impact their emotions have on teammates.
- Confident in their ability to lead others.
- Able to stop or change ineffective emotional habits.
- Able to make others feel confident.
- Capable of persevering through difficult periods.
- Able to produce high emotional energy.

Six Steps to Developing Your Personalized Leadership Development Plan

See page 31 to complete the steps below

Step 1

Perform a self-assessment of your physical leadership skills using the **Emotional Intelligence Leadership Inventory**. Be honest with yourself when rating your current skill level. Self-assessments are often difficult for student-athletes. Do your best and be willing to acknowledge weaknesses as well as strengths.

Step 2

Identify several items from your inventory for improvement. The areas you select don't need to be those with the lowest rating on your inventory. You might find that improving on a higher rated area will help you in becoming a more effective leader. List on your **Leadership Development Plan (LDP)** under *Section I: Areas for Improvement*.

Step 3

In *Section II: Personal Action Items* on your LDP describe strategies for improving in the areas listed in Section I. Be specific. You might want to first prepare a rough draft and then finalize your personal action plan on your LDP. It is recommended that to develop an effective set of strategies you sit down and discuss this section with your coach or leadership support person.

Step 4

Describe the results or outcomes you expect as you develop your leadership skills. Be specific.

Step 5

Identify a person to provide you support and feedback regarding your plan for improvement. Set up a schedule to meet with this person on a regular basis to discuss progress on your LDP. Ask your support person to provide you constructive feedback on your leadership performance.

Step 6

Assess your improvement on a regular basis. Be disciplined in this self-assessment process by recording a new score for each inventory item on a regular schedule. Your success and achievement as a leader will be documented here!

Emotional Intelligence Leadership Inventory

5 = Always 4 = Most of the Time 3 = Some of the Time 2 = Rarely 1 = Never

		1 st Assessment	2 nd Assessment	3 rd Assessment	4 th Assessment
Date of Assessment:					
<i>Doing assessments at 3 week intervals will help you to improve as a team leader.</i>					
1	I can identify changes in my emotions.				
2	I relax when I'm in pressure situations.				
3	I act productively when I'm angry.				
4	I act productively when I'm frustrated.				
5	I use "internal talk" to affect my emotional state.				
6	I identify situations that influence my emotional state.				
7	I easily regroup after a setback.				
8	I take actions with a high level of self-confidence.				
9	I regularly show support for my teammates.				
10	I work out conflicts with teammates.				
11	I know when I'm thinking negatively.				
12	I stop or change ineffective emotional habits.				
13	I mediate conflict between team members.				
14	I help teammates understand how their emotions affect the team.				
15	I help teammates manage their emotions.				
16	I try to lift others up when they are in a slump.				
17	I can control my impulses.				
18	I am capable of delaying gratification.				
19	I understand how my teammates are feeling.				
20	I encourage teammates to think positively about stressful and challenging situations.				
21	I apply positive thinking to stressful and challenging situations.				
22	I take time to reflect on my performance.				
23	I encourage teammates to reflect on their performance.				
24	I help teammates regroup after a setback.				
25	I show empathy and understanding to others.				
Self-Assessments are Fundamental to Enhancing Self-Awareness					

Your Personalized Leadership Development Plan (LDP): Emotional Intelligence Dimension

Examine your self-assessment skills inventory on the previous page and determine the areas you need to improve to enhance your leadership in the *Emotional Intelligence Dimension*. The best team leaders understand and value the various emotional aspects of sports.

I. Areas for Improvement

I need to improve: *(example: my ability to sense the emotional state of my teammates.)*

II. Personal Action Items

Strategies to address the areas for improvement:

(Example: When I notice a teammate is emotionally upset I will seek ways to help).

I will _____

I will _____

I will _____

I will _____

III. Anticipated Outcomes

Anticipated results from improving my EI Dimension leadership skills:

(Example: I anticipate helping the coaching staff keep our emotions aligned with the goals of each practice session.)

I anticipate _____

I anticipate _____

I anticipate _____

IV. Support

A person who might serve as a mentor, coach, or peer leader when working to improve my *EI Dimension* leadership skills is: _____

Skill Dimension: Social Leadership

Players Skilled in Social Leadership are:

- Capable of listening to others with empathy.
- Able to build trust.
- Able to organize and lead a team meeting.
- Respectful of all individuals that support the team.
- Able to encourage social interaction among teammates.
- Able to help build a cohesive team environment.
- Willing to counsel team members.
- Able to recognize individual successes and achievements.
- Willing to invest time to develop friendships with teammates.
- Able to understand the importance of camaraderie.

Six Steps to Developing Your Personalized Leadership Development Plan

See page 35 to complete the steps below.

Step 1

Perform a self-assessment of your physical leadership skills using the **Social Leadership Inventory**. Be honest with yourself when rating your current skill level. Self-assessments are often difficult for student-athletes. Do your best and be willing to acknowledge weaknesses as well as strengths.

Step 2

Identify several items from your inventory for improvement. The areas you select don't need to be those with the lowest rating on your inventory. You might find that improving on a higher rated area will help you in becoming a more effective leader. List on your **Leadership Development Plan (LDP)** under *Section I: Areas for Improvement*.

Step 3

In *Section II: Personal Action Items* on your LDP describe strategies for improving in the areas listed in Section I. Be specific. You might want to first prepare a rough draft and then finalize your personal action plan on your LDP. To develop an effective set of strategies it is recommended you sit down and discuss this section with your coach or leadership support person.

Step 4

In *Section III* Describe the results or outcomes you anticipate as you develop your leadership skills. Be specific.

Step 5

In *Section IV* Identify a person to provide you support and feedback regarding your plan for improvement. Set up a schedule to meet with this person on a regular basis to discuss progress on your LDP. Ask your support person to provide you constructive feedback on your leadership performance.

Step 6

Assess your improvement on a regular basis. Be disciplined in the self-assessment process by recording a new score for each inventory item on a regular schedule. Your success and achievement as a leader will be documented here!

Social Leadership Inventory

5 = Always 4 = Most of the Time 3 = Some of the Time 2 = Rarely 1 = Never

		1 st Assessment	2 nd Assessment	3 rd Assessment	4 th Assessment
Date of Assessment:					
<i>Doing assessments at 3 week intervals will help you to improve as a team leader.</i>					
1	I invest time in developing friendships with my teammates.				
2	I find it easy to organize team get-togethers.				
3	I am interested in my teammates life plans.				
4	I am able to organize a team meeting.				
5	I am willing to lead a team meeting.				
6	I encourage social interaction among team members.				
7	I am respectful of all individuals that support the team.				
8	I am concerned for my teammates.				
9	I recognize individual successes and achievements of teammates.				
10	I listen to my teammates when they are talking.				
11	I am capable of giving and receiving criticism.				
12	I am able to create a positive environment when with my team.				
13	I try to understand the perspective of my teammates.				
14	I am capable of communicating effectively with my teammates.				
15	I provide effective feedback to my teammates.				
16	I find ways to celebrate team success.				
17	I follow through on commitments.				
18	I am a loyal team member.				
19	I demonstrate respect for my teammates daily.				
20	I encourage my teammates to build positive relationships.				
21	When someone says something to me in confidence, I am able to keep it to myself.				
22	I cooperate with team supporters.				
23	When I counsel other players, I try to put myself in their shoes.				
24	When someone is talking to me about another player or coach behind their back, I ask them to stop and think about their motivation.				
25	I make contact with each teammate on a regular basis.				
Self-Assessments are Fundamental to Enhancing Self-Awareness					

Your Personalized Leadership Development Plan (LDP): Social Dimension

Examine your self-assessment skills inventory on the previous page and determine the areas you need to improve to enhance your leadership in the *Social Dimension*. The best team leaders understand and value the social aspects of sports-on the field, off the field, in season and during the off-season.

I. Areas for Improvement

I need to improve: *(example: my ability to organize and lead a team meeting.)*

II. Personal Action Items

Strategies to address the areas for improvement:

(Example: I will organize a team meeting with the returning players prior to the first preseason workout.)

I will _____

I will _____

I will _____

I will _____

III. Anticipated Outcomes

Anticipated results from improving my Social Dimension leadership skills:

(I anticipate gaining the returning players trust in my role as a team leader.)

I anticipate _____

I anticipate _____

I anticipate _____

IV. Support

A person who might serve as a mentor, coach, or peer leader when working to improve my *Social Dimension* leadership skills is: _____

CHAPTER 6

THE TEAM LIFE CYCLE

*“If you suckers don’t know by now that you need one another,
you’ll never know.”*

–Mike Kryzewski

The very nature of team building implies that distinct phases or stages will emerge, each with slightly different characteristics. The model used in this workbook is taken from Bruce Tuckman’s group development model. The dynamics of your team will change over time based on challenges, problems, solutions, and personalities. The phases of the team life cycle model do not have clear beginning and ending points. However, the phases are a valuable way to explain what is going on as your team develops and help you understand ways in which your leadership can affect your teammates. Keep in mind, no two teams will ever experience the exact same dynamics at the exact same time during the team life cycle. There are just too many variables to ensure a fluid transition from phase to phase.

Phase 1 – Forming: Orientation and Unfamiliarity

As your team comes together to begin its season it is natural for team members to be unfamiliar with each other. It is inevitable in sports that each season new members join to replace those that have graduated or moved on. This phase of the team life cycle is characterized by a sense of discomfort—players have yet to become comfortable in opening up to one another. This takes time and occurs through the various ways your team members interact with one another.

Tension is often high during this phase as team members realize the competitive nature of the team environment. In general, players may not know their roles on the team as they have yet to be defined by the coaching staff. Of course, this takes time and often changes during the season. Competition is inevitable and each player will react differently to the team environment during this phase.

During this phase, you might be asking:

- Why am I here?

- What will I be required to do?
- Will I be accepted by my teammates?
- Will I be able to contribute as a leader?
- What can I do as a team leader?
- Who are my teammates?
- Can I trust my teammates?

Team building actions during this phase include:

- Creating different ways for you and your teammates to interact on a social level. This might include getting together for lunch with new team members or organizing a team get-together.
- Becoming familiar with the strengths and weaknesses (physical, intellectual, emotional, and social dimensions) of your teammates.
- Discussing with each other personal and team expectations.
- Assessing your leadership progress.

Phase 2 – Storming: Conflict and Confusion

This phase is usually the most difficult time in the life cycle of a team’s development. Team members are still getting used to each others personalities and habits. Emotions tend to be highly charged. Conflicts and confusion will arise as individual team member styles and personalities begin to mesh together. During this phase roles and responsibilities begin to materialize creating clarity for some players while causing confusion for others. Sometimes this becomes apparent as starting and backup roles emerge.

It is during this phase when team members begin learning to cooperate and trust one another. Cliques are likely to begin during this phase. Cliques seem natural and emerge based on friendships. However, be aware that cliques that form based on negative forces—such as the in-out groups—can be very destructive to the chemistry of the team.

During this phase, you might be asking:

- How much influence do I have?
- Will I succeed as a team leader?
- What roles can I assume?
- How will we work together?
- How do I compete and cooperate with my teammates?

Team building actions during this phase include:

- Developing a shared team mission or vision.
- Discussing roles and performance standards.
- Encouraging listening to each other.
- Avoiding standing apart from your teammates.
- Identifying negative actions and reinforcing positive actions of teammates.
- Assessing your leadership progress.

Phase 3 – Norming: Clarity and Cohesion

During this phase, team member conflict and confusion is replaced by a sense of awareness and clarity along with the growing comfort of team cohesion. When your team reaches this stage, team members feel a sense of responsibility towards each other and acknowledge the importance of unity. Team practices are collective efforts with teammates pulling for one another. Productivity in practices is noticeable.

It is during this phase that the team begins to form its identity. During this phase, roles and responsibilities are clearer and standards and team rules are set. Team members express a high level of trust and are now ready to offer and receive constructive feedback.

During this phase, you might be asking:

- Will I be a valued member of the team?
- Will we be successful?
- Are we progressing toward our goals?
- Is everyone on the team committed to a shared vision and common goals?
- Have we built bonds of trust?
- Have I helped a teammate grow and develop?

Team building actions during this phase include:

- Assessing team progress.
- Providing constructive feedback to teammates.
- Encouraging team members to work towards the teams goals.
- Creatively bringing team members together.
- Assessing your leadership progress.

Phase 4 – Performing: Achievement and Esprit de Corp

During this phase of team development team members should express a level of comfort and belief in the coaching staff and what they are teaching. Team members readily acknowledge their needs for each other—physically, intellectually, emotionally, and socially. Team members are settled into their roles and discontent is minimal. Practices should be very productive as the pace of practice has become somewhat habituated.

Disagreement may arise among team members, however, teammates now find ways to quickly resolve issues and differences. The commitment to the performance of the team takes precedence over individual needs. The focus at this stage is on team success and players exhibit a highly developed sense of team. Loyalty and team morale are evidenced in celebrations of achievements.

During this phase, you might be asking:

- What new goals can the team achieve?
- How can the team improve?

- What can I do to help the team to the next level of performance?
- How do we share responsibilities to make necessary changes?

Team building actions during this phase include:

- Identifying and improving problem-solving skills.
- Opening up discussions related to team goals and improvement.
- Encouraging and getting feedback from team members.
- Discussing openly and candidly with the coaching staff.
- Refusing to let outside distractions enter into the team arena.
- Assessing your leadership progress.

Phase 5 – Adjourning: Celebration and Respect

The fifth and final phase of the team building process is essentially the closing down of the team’s season. When the last game is played, the team that stuck together through ups and downs, highs and lows, will begin to celebrate accomplishments and pay respects to one another.

This phase provides an opportunity to celebrate success and growth of team, both individually and collectively. Team members will engage in the process of reflection on the team building process and personal growth. This is generally a time of extremely positive feelings toward teammates and coaches, which makes it difficult for team members to disengage and move on to their next challenge.

During this phase, you might be asking:

- What comes next?
- How do we share our individual and team successes?
- Have I helped next year’s team leaders learn about leadership?
- Do the coaches recognize my contributions to the team through leading?
- How does what I’ve learned transfer to other areas of my life?

Team building actions during this phase include:

- Celebrating the successes and achievements of the team.
- Performing your own personal evaluation of the “team experience.”
- Finding ways to keep in touch with teammates and coaches.
- Discussing with your teammates and coaches how helping build the team helped you become a better leader.

CHAPTER 7

BUILDING TRUST

“...whenever people on a team decide not to trust, everyone will gear down their effort until they’re doing just enough to get by.”

–Pat Riley

Building Bonds that Bind a Team Together

Trust is a product of belief in your teammates, reliance on their strength of integrity, confidence in their commitment to a set of shared values and goals. Trust results from openness, being truthful to yourself and others. When team members trust one another they know they can rely on each other for physical, intellectual, emotional and social support. The foundation of trust is built one action at a time.

Building bonds of trust requires that people mean what they say and do what they say. Building trust takes time, however, it erodes quickly. Such things as negative attitudes can tear down bonds of trust and erect barriers between players. The base of your role as a team leader revolves largely around your ability to help build a trusting atmosphere. You are around your teammates away from the playing field, on the playing field, and in the locker room. Work hard to build bonds of trust that will bind your team together.

Nothing makes the team environment more meaningful and enjoyable than when your team experiences an unshakeable bond of trust. Cohesiveness comes from trust. Dedication to one another comes from trust. Your role as a team leader requires you to actively engage in building the bonds of trust.

Ways to Build the Bonds of Trust

Honesty	Spirit of Togetherness
Integrity	Appreciating Others
Sacrifice	Recognition
Positive Attitude	Tolerance
Success	Open Expression of Concerns
Failure	Ethical and Moral Actions

Empathy
Open Lines of Communication

Following Team Rules
Shared Goals

Ways to Break the Bonds of Trust

Negative Attitude
Resentment
Breaking Team Rules
Lying
Selfishness

Formation of Cliques and Rivals
Feelings of Frustration
Lack of Ethics
Cheating
Egotistical Attitude

Leadership Exercises

Review the elements that build and break the bonds of trust. Select a few from each list and briefly describe how the element helps in either building or breaking the bonds of trust.

Complete the following sentences. Answer as you would if you were in a conversation with a teammate.

“I can trust you when...”

“I can’t trust you when...”

Schedule a meeting with your teammates and discuss how choices and actions that each team member makes can build or break the team’s efforts to build trusting relationships. Describe some of the comments and your observations from this meeting below.

Chapter 8

VALUES OF THE GAME

“The values learned on the playing field—how to set goals, endure, take criticism and risks, become team players, use our beliefs, stay healthy and deal with stress—prepare us for life.”

—Donna de Varona

Former New York Knicks basketball great, Bill Bradley, wrote an insightful and inspiring book exemplifying the virtues of participation in sports activities. The book, *Values of the Game*, provides the reader with a powerful look at why values are meaningful and significant and how they develop from commitment to the team concept.

It’s a healthy idea to explore values that are important to you and that you find to be “values of the game.” Rather than read about values, the following exercise will help you identify and understand your values.

Leadership Exercise

Make a list of values you feel you gain through participation in sports.

Write a brief summary of why you selected the values above.

Reflect on a time when one (or several) of your values were instrumental in helping you achieve success. Briefly describe.

Write down a few answers to the following questions. This exercise will help you clarify your values and begin exploring your teams values.

What kind of person do I want to be?

What kind of teammate do I want to be?

How would I like my teammates to describe me?

What are my strengths, and how can I utilize them to help my team?

What kind of team do I want to play on?

What kind of teammates do I want?

What are our team goals?

What are our team values?

Chapter 9

CHOOSING TO LEAD

“It’s not the absence of leadership potential that inhibits the development of leaders; it’s the persistence of the myth that leadership can’t be learned.”

–James Kouzes & Barry Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*

Life as a team leader can be tumultuous. Being a leader is not a default position; it happens not by chance nor by student-athletes not interested in it. It happens because a student-athlete looks at leadership as an opportunity to help his or her team achieve its goals. As a team leader you’ll encounter many personal and team challenges during your season that require you to make decisions or solve problems.

The following situations are hypothetical scenarios to get you thinking about common problems and how you might help resolve problems and conflicts when they arise. The objective of this chapter is to prepare you for real world incidents and events. The old adage “preparation precedes performance” holds true. So simply think of this as practice in thinking through potential problems.

Each situation in this exercise involves a variety of team leadership problems: team values, team development, team goals, team roles, trust, communication, morale, and the team life-cycle. Completing each scenario is an opportunity for you to explore solving a wide-range of problems and team issues. Hopefully this will increase your awareness of typical team leadership responsibilities and increase your effectiveness should a similar problem arise during your season.

continued

Situation 1

One of the starting players has missed several practices for personal reasons and starts the next game. The back-up player, who works hard every day, feels he/she should have been given the chance to start. In the locker room before the game you notice how dejected he/she feels. You question how effective he/she will be when called on to play.

What would you do? Use the *Thinking it Through* questions for consideration on page 50 to guide your response.

Situation 2

One of your teammates constantly bad-mouths the coaching staff blaming them for his/her lack of playing time.

What would you do? Use the *Thinking it Through* questions for consideration on page 50 to guide your response.

Situation 3

Your team has completed one-third of the regular season schedule. During practice you notice that several players are not totally committed to the team. It appears that they've become disinterested in the team's goals as a result of a lack of playing time. In the locker room they joke around and express little concern for practice or games.

What would you do? Use the *Thinking it Through* questions for consideration on page 50 to guide your response.

Situation 4

One of the best players on the team has begun to think more and more for himself/herself, looking to increase their visibility at the expense of the team.

What would you do? Use the *Thinking it Through* questions for consideration on page 50 to guide your response.

Situation 5

Several players have formed a tight-knit group, a clique, and tend to go their own way away from the playing field. At practice and during games these players seem to be good teammates, though none goes out of his/her way to help another team member.

What would you do? Use the *Thinking it Through* questions for consideration on page 50 to guide your response.

Situation 6

Your team has just lost a tough game to a conference opponent. In the locker room after the game, you notice no one is talking. The ride home is quiet and little is said about the game. In practice the next day, it is evident that the team is flat and seems deflated from the loss.

What would you do? Use the *Thinking it Through* questions for consideration on page 50 to guide your response.

Situation 7

Two of your teammates, seniors, are keeping to themselves and don't associate with the team away from the playing field. During practice they primarily talk to each other and seldom show support for other team members. During games they sit next to each other on the sidelines or bench and say little to other team members.

What would you do? Use the *Thinking it Through* questions for consideration on page 50 to guide your response.

Situation 8

One of the starting players has been benched because of a lack of productivity. He/she is not happy and this attitude is evident in practice. The coach is aware of this problem, but as a teammate you are concerned.

What would you do? Use the *Thinking it Through* questions for consideration on page 50 to guide your response.

Situation 9

One of your teammates that usually comes off the bench has been promoted to a starting position. He/she is excited to "have a shot" at starting and getting more playing time. In fact, his/her excitement flows into an attitude of a "star" player.

What would you do? Use the *Thinking it Through* questions for consideration on page 50 to guide your response.

Situation 10

It's pre-season and you've noticed that several team members do more talking than lifting in the weight room. This has been going on for several weeks now. This usually happens when the coach is not supervising the weight room and expects team members to be mature enough to workout on their own.

What would you do? Use the *Thinking it Through* questions for consideration on page 50 to guide your response.

Situation 11

Your team has just won a big conference game. However, one of your starting teammates contributed far less than they normally do. The teammate starts pointing fingers at another teammate.

What would you do? Use the *Thinking it Through* questions for consideration on page 50 to guide your response.

Situation 12

Two teammates that have been best friends are no longer talking to each other. You've asked one of the teammates if he/she is upset with the other. The response was, "It's none of your business."

What would you do? Use the *Thinking it Through* questions for consideration on page 50 to guide your response.

Situation 13

Several team members are experiencing academic problems. Exams are right around the corner and everyone is concerned.

What would you do? Use the *Thinking it Through* questions for consideration on page 50 to guide your response.

Situation 14

Your team's leading scorer has just been declared academically ineligible for the remainder of the season. However, your team is still in position to win your conference. This news has adversely affected the team's morale and confidence.

What would you do? Use the *Thinking it Through* questions for consideration on page 50 to guide your response.

Situation 15

Your team's captain, a returning senior, has just injured his/her knee. You've only played three games, but you won't have him/her for the rest of the season. He/she was an All-Conference performer last year and was counted on to provide leadership and increased productivity on the playing field.

What would you do? Use the *Thinking it Through* questions for consideration on page 50 to guide your response.

Situation 16

After several losses in a row, a couple of team members begin to re-examine the team's goals for the season. It is apparent that the enthusiasm displayed during the pre-season has dissipated because of this long losing streak and the realization that your team won't make the playoffs.

What would you do? Use the *Thinking it Through* questions for consideration on page 50 to guide your response.

Situation 17

You have tried to get the team together for social outings. The core of the team prefers to attend parties that aren't attended by other team members.

What would you do? Use the *Thinking it Through* questions for consideration on page 50 to guide your response.

Situation 18

Two team members have decided that because they aren't getting enough playing time they are contemplating quitting the team.

What would you do? Use the *Thinking it Through* questions for consideration on page 50 to guide your response.

Situation 19

You have an argument with a teammate in the locker room. The disagreement was over something that was trivial and meaningless.

What would you do? Use the *Thinking it Through* questions for consideration on page 50 to guide your response.

Situation 20

You notice that one of the new members on the team has team leadership aspirations.

What would you do? Use the *Thinking it Through* questions for consideration on page 50 to guide your response.

Thinking it Through

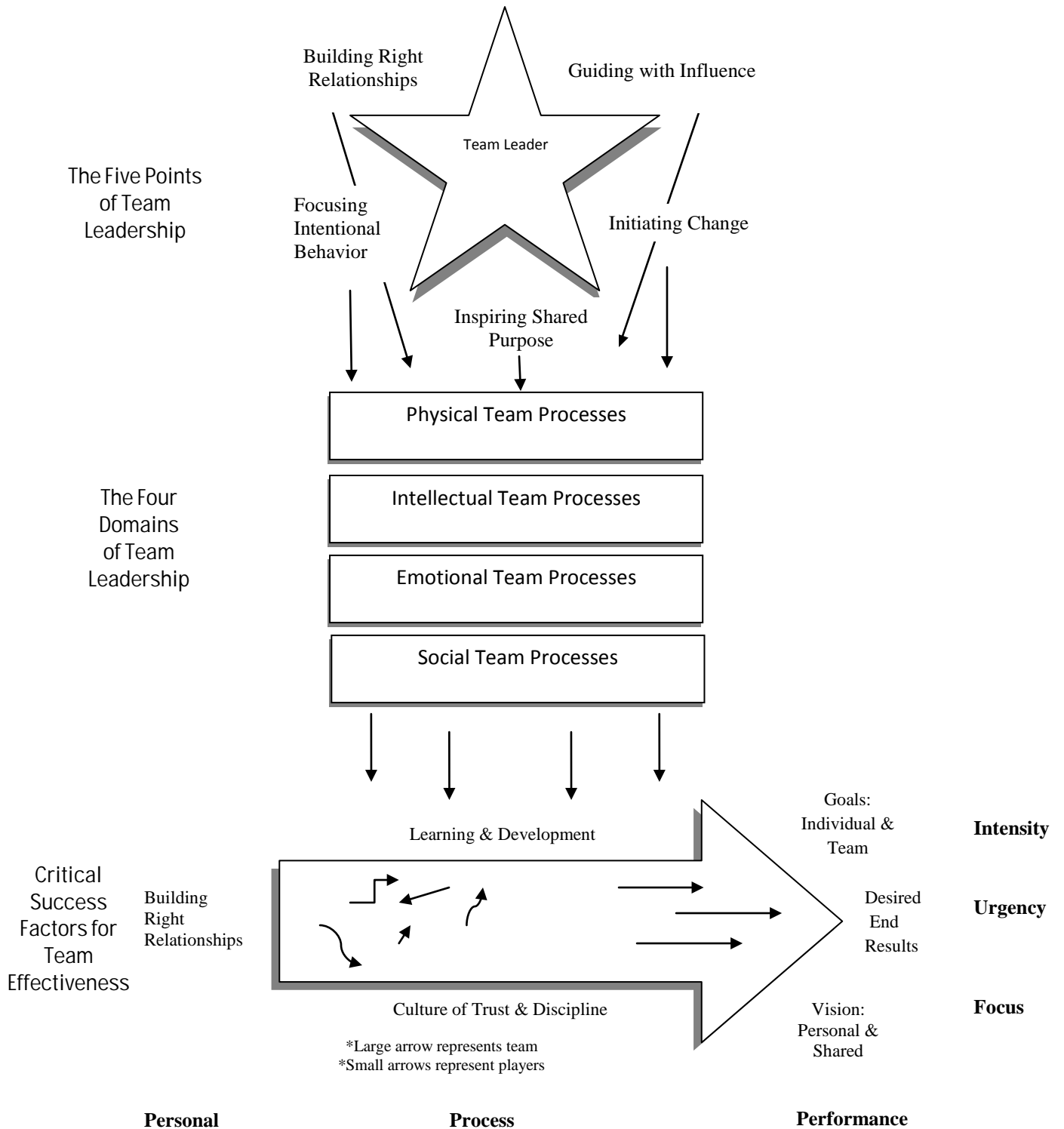
Questions for Consideration

The following series of questions will help you think through the twenty scenarios on the previous pages. Through the answers to the questions you will begin to see how to lead by thinking through issues and events and the leadership skills necessary for taking action when a leadership challenge arises.

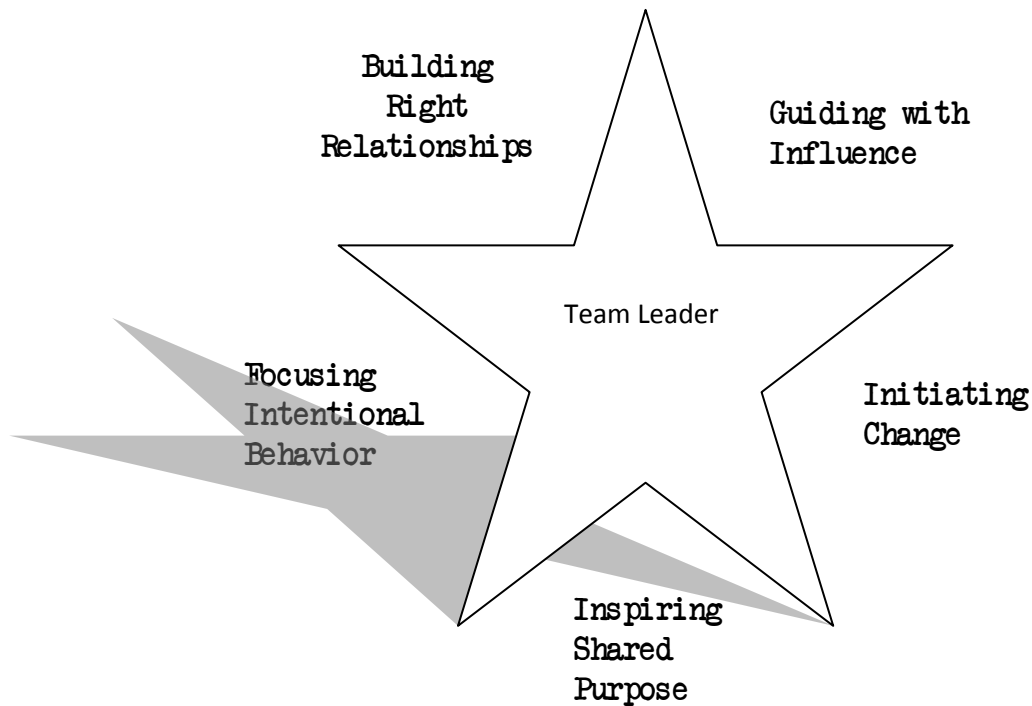
1. What would likely happen if you did NOTHING?
2. What standards and/or expectations are at issue?
3. What resources are available to you and your teammates for solving this issue?
4. What are the barriers to solving this issue?
5. If you take action you might get both positive and negative results. Identify some positive results. Identify some negative results. How will negative results affect your decision?

The Academy for Sport Leadership

Leadership Development Model



The 5 Points of Team Leadership



The 5 Practices of Team Leadership

ACTIONS FOR DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Focus on priorities. Start by focusing on developmental goals that matter to the team.

Implement something every day. Great leaders actively stretch their comfort zones while shrinking their zone of acceptance.

Reflect on what happens. Learning from experience comes from understanding the experience. Use Critical Incident Questionnaires, After Action Reflection, and your Leadership Development Plan to learn from what happens to you.

Seek feedback and support. Effective team leaders learn from feedback of coaches, teammates, and most importantly critical self-reflection.

Transfer learning to practice of leadership. Growth and development take place when learning is transferred to future leadership opportunities.



Notes:



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