

# Building A Character Education Program



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# Topics We Will Cover

- Definition of Discipline
- 5 Keys to Developing Discipline
- Identifying different attitudes of your student athletes
- Methods for developing individual and team discipline
- Developing the “difficult” athletes

# What is Discipline?

- Comes from the Latin *disciplina* “instruction,” from the root *discere*, “to learn.”
- Discipline means to instruct a person to follow a particular code of conduct.
- In the field of human development, discipline refers to a method of modeling character and teaching self-control and acceptable behavior

# Discipline

- Discipline: Doing what you are supposed to do, when you are supposed be doing it, the way it's suppose to be done... Regardless of Circumstance

# Character

- A recent study found that 84% of teachers believe character should be taught in schools
  - How many of us took a class in college that taught us how to teach character?
  - Is it possible to develop character?  
“The true test of a man’s character is what he does when no one is looking”

# Attitude and Discipline

“Nothing on earth can stop a man with the right mental attitude from achieving a goal, and nothing on earth can help a man with the wrong mental attitude” – Thomas Jefferson

IT IS ALL ABOUT INDIVIDUAL ATTITUDES  
AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE  
TEAM ATTITUDE!

# 5 Keys to Developing Discipline

1. Clear Expectations
2. Open Lines of Communication
3. Build Discipline From Within
4. Clear Accountability
5. Coach Desired Outcomes

# Clear Expectations

- Clearly Communicate team vision
  - What is your Mission?
  - What is your Vision?
  - Involve Players in Goal Setting
  - Give them ownership!



# Open Lines of Communication

- Open Door Policy
- Allow Players to Voice Concerns
- Listen!
- Unity Council
- Captains

# Build Discipline From Within

- Have a set of clear standards for players
- Build accountability
- Off-Season Teams with rewards
  - Players will be accountable to themselves and their sub-teams, as well as the team as a whole

# Clear Accountability

- o Address violations of team standards immediately
- o Regardless of the level of talent, all incidents must be addressed quickly
- o Make sure the athlete clearly understands the violation and the desired behavior
- o Be HONEST!
- o Don't let your emotions lead your decision

# Coach Desired Outcomes

- o Anyone can make a kid run for a violation of team standards
- o Make sure they understand what they did and what you want- Ask them
- o Teach, don't preach
  - Teach by asking questions and listening
- o Ask for a commitment from the athlete
- o Offer complete and comprehensive support

# Identifying Your Athletes

- o Unmotivated Athlete
- o The Selective Participant
- o The “Bad Attitude” Player
- o Mr. Overconfident
- o The Angry Athlete

# The Unmotivated Athlete

- o Appear Unsure of Themselves
- o May have pressure from someone else to play
- o May appear lazy
- o Effort is low or inconsistent
  - Find their hot button
  - Look to build on small successes
  - Find the sources of hesitance
  - Talk to the parents and athlete (Why are they playing?)

# The Selective Participant

- o Usually born with some talent and somewhere has been allowed to think their talent is enough
- o Listens when they feel like it- Good Days and Bad Days
- o Choose when they work, and frequently coast
- o Absorbed in their own agenda
- o Often will have an excuse to come late or leave early
- o Give limited effort unless “they” are the focus
- o Never fully “vested”

# Handling The Selective Participant

- o Identify and teach that this is a behavior that is unacceptable to team standards- Ask athlete
- o Correctly Confront (privately, directly, immediately, correct) everything that is not acceptable
- o Publicly praise the athlete for appropriate effort and behavior
- o Start the hardest working player, regardless of talent
- o At some point, the team may have to move on without this athlete



# The Bad Attitude

- o Signs are simple

Any behaviors that are unacceptable according to the team standards

Anything that has to do with teammates right to learn, or coaches right to teach

## Handling the Bad Attitude

- Write a clear, concise definition of what an athlete is for your team
- Demonstrate a positive attitude
- Be clear and concise with expectations
- **HOLD THEM ACCOUNTABLE!**

# The Overconfident Athlete

- Bragging
- Better than you attitude
- An “I can coast and still beat you” attitude
- Critical to others
- Demonstrates a sense of entitlement

## **Handling the Overconfident Athlete**

- **Teach your athletes the difference between confidence because of preparation and arrogance**
- **Humble the athlete privately first**
- **Teach your athletes to be humble in victory and gracious in defeat**

“No coach has won a game by what he knows- its what the players know that counts”- Bear Bryant

Coaching is not about winning- Winning is a byproduct of what you teach

Coaching Football Is About Developing Leaders.

Athletes don't build character, coaches do!

# How do we motivate a person to act in a way we desire? (Self Discipline)

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- People must have a desire to act on their own
- If people do not have that desire, you must find a way to sell them on the benefits of action
- People must be able to see the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow
- You, as a leader, must be able to show people what the end outcome will be
- Then, show them your way of getting to the end will benefit them
- Do not try to sell people on “The Company Line” without showing them how they will benefit

# Three Assumptions We Make

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- You Want To Be The Best Player You Can Be- If Not, You Don't Need To Come Back Tomorrow
- You Must Want To Play For A Championship Team- The Team Is Not Here For You, You Are Here For The Team
- You Want To Be The Best Person You Can Be

# Team Standards

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- Do Your Best
- Treat Others The Way You Want To Be Treated
- Be On Time

“How Will The Decision You Make Today Affect Our Team?”

# Barriers To Success

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- Low Self-Esteem/Poor Self Image
- Negative Attitude
- Fear of Failure
- Constant Broken Promises At Home
- Acceptance of Low Expectations
- In Many Of Our Schools, Mediocrity Is the Norm: This Is Dangerous!

# Overcoming Barriers: “Failure Is Not A Person, It Is An Event”

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- Failure Is An Event Everyone Faces, It Is Not A Description Of A Person
- Why Did We Fail? How Could We Have Achieved Our Goal? What Did We Learn?
- Small Success Add Up Quickly: Set Small, Achievable Goals
- Be Clear, Concise, and Consistent
- If You Say You Are Going To Do Something, Do It
- Kids Must Be Taught To Finish Something



# Developing A Positive Attitude

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“Ninety percent of our success is not what happens to us, but how we react to what happens”

We must teach players how to have a great attitude all the time

Give them a clear definition of what a great attitude looks like

Provide Opportunities for them to practice dealing with adversity- Practice Overcoming Adversity

Model the behavior you are looking for

# What is a great attitude?

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We asked our players to define what it means to be a Bulldog!

Great team building activity

1. Always early
2. Treats others with respect
3. Gives maximum effort in every drill
4. Listens to corrections by making eye contact with the coach or professor
5. Sits in the first two rows in class
6. Calls academic coach if he is going to miss class
7. Is accountable to himself, and his teammates
8. Makes decisions based on the good of the Bulldog Team rather than for himself
9. Understands the coaches will make decisions with the entire team in mind
10. Willing to win a national championship!

# Why Are We Going To Teach?

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- Why Are We On The Cusp Of Greatness?
- What Do We Need To Be Great?
- We have a great weight program, we have a great speed program, the X's and O's are good, WHAT IS MISSING?
- What is our job as coaches?

# Goals

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- Live For Each Other
- MTXE- Mental Toughness, Extra Effort, Overcome Adversity, Unselfishly Relentless
- Prepare- One Day at a time, One drill at a time, Find A Way
- Tradition- Physically Tough- Special Team Pride- Summer Workouts- Service
- Win Our League
- Win Playoff Game
- Win National Title

# Athletics Build Character

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- Athletics Don't Build Character, Great Coaches Do!
- Developing Character Takes 15 Minutes A Day To Teach and 24 Hours A Day To Practice
- Character Education Is A Foundation Of Success

“Positive Reinforcement Will  
Result In Positive Results”

“Praise The Positive  
Enthusiastically, Correct The  
Negative Silently”

# Coach The Mistakes

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- When A Player Makes A Mistake, Coach Them, Don't Berate Them
- Choose Your Words Carefully, They Will Impact Your Players Forever!
- If A Player Doesn't Learn, Change Your Approach
- Einstein Defines Insanity As Doing The Same Things Over And Over And Expecting Different Results
- If You Want To Do Something You Have Never Done, Do Something You Have Never Done
- Figure Out How To Push Each Player's Buttons
- Don't Preach To The Player, Teach The Player



## **“Don’t dwell on the negative, Emphasize the Positive”**

Lou Holtz and Arkansas Was A Huge Underdog and Beat Oklahoma. He had his players make a list of why they could beat the Sooners, despite losing their top players. They became extremely confident, and beat Oklahoma 31-6.



# Positive Absolutes

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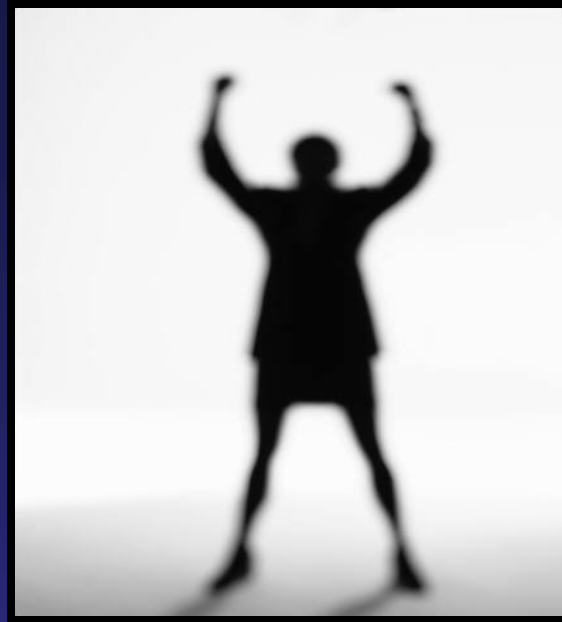
- No Kid Will Leave Practice With A Negative Impression Of Practice
- Never Be Negative About One Player In Front Of The Team
- Never Criticize Another Coach In Front Of the Players Or Around The Players
- Coaches Must Support Each Other Fully
- Always Find Something To Praise
- Never Criticize Your Team or Players In The Media Or With Fans



# Keys To Motivating Players

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- Establish Trust
- Set Team Rules That Must Be Enforced
- Establish Clear Expectations
- Love Your Players Like Your Own Sons
- Do You Love The Player In The Jersey, Or Do You Love The Jersey Number?
- Develop Positive Leaders For Your Program
- Leaders Are Not Dropped On Your Program, They Are Developed



“The Best Motivators Of  
Players Are Other  
Players”

# Finding Your Leaders

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- The Kids You Want To Lead May Not Be Your Best Leaders
- Find Players The Team Gravitates Towards and Teach Them To Be Leaders
- You Must Train Your Leaders And Prepare Them For Leadership Roles
- Everyone Is A Leader, Either Positive Or Negative, Everyone Exerts Influence
- Listen To Your Leaders

“There Can Be No Egos In Football”

# Training Leaders

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- Develop A Leadership Curriculum, or Use A Curriculum Already In Place
- Have Players Complete Individual and Group Assignments: Write Things Down
- Meet With Your Players To Talk About Leadership
- Role Play With Your Seniors So They Learn How To Model Behavior
- Use Stories and Analogies To Teach Lessons, Try To Avoid Preaching

# Developing Pride In Your Players

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- Treat Your Players Special!
- Give Awards For Improvement and Effort
- Create Subgroups Within Your Team
- Pride Runs and Activities Can Build Unity
- Name Different Units Of Your Team
- Provide Players With Special Surprises
- Pre Game Hype And Traditions

# Activities To Build Pride

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- Lay Out The Players Uniforms On Game Day, Like A Professional Locker Room
- Perform Community Service Projects As A Team
- Fund Raise For Your Equipment
- Take Players To Sporting Events As A Team
- Schedule A Barbeque Or A Bowling Night



# Undefeatable vs. Underdog



- Don't Build Up Your Opponents
- Build Up Your Team
- Expect To Win- Hard Work Breeds Confidence
- Expect To Beat Everyone and Blow Out The Weaker Teams

# Developing Winners!

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- Take Time To Reflect At The End Of Practice- Ask Your Players What They Learned
- Turn Your Water Breaks Into Mini Reflections- Position Coaches Talk With Players-Dennis Parker
- Take Inventory-Be Grateful
- To Many Times We Complain about What We Don't Have. Every Coach Here Will Tell You What They Don't Have. Be Grateful For What You Do Have
- Do Exercises With Kids So They Can Learn To Be Grateful

# Dealing With Loss

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- Turn Your Losses Into Wins With Lifelong Lessons
- How Could We Have Won?
- What Could We Have Done Better?
- Goal Cards: What Will I Do To Improve?
- Loss Happens Throughout Life
- How Do We Deal With Loss?

# Create Something To Hold On To

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- Using Words To Motivate and Inspire
- Give Meaning To The Words You Use
- Have A Word Of The Week, Include It In The Game Plan
- Explain and Discuss The Word You Are Using
- Have Pre Game Traditions Players Will Look Forward To

# Developing A Sense Of Accomplishment

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- Set A Series Of Small, Achievable, Realistic Goals For Your Team In Practice.
- Off-Season Training Is A Great Time To Set Goals!
- As Kids Accomplish Goals, Applaud Them And Recognize Each Small Achievement
- Teach Them To Finish Each Activity, Each Drill, Each Homework Assignment
- As Your Players Achieve Small Goals, They will Begin To Feel Successful
- Success Will Change Their Belief System
- They Will Believe In Themselves

# Winning The Parents

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- Make A Concerted Effort To Meet The Parents of Your Players
- Show Parents The Benefit Of The Program- Academic, Character Education, Leadership, Athletic
- Contact Parents With Updates, Both Positive And Negative
- Keep The Parents Informed
- Be Direct and Firm, Don't Let Parents Dictate The Direction Of Your Program
- Parents Care About Their Kid, You Care About The Program and their kid



**ABC High School  
Titan Football  
123 Mockingbird Lane  
Anytown, NY 11112**

Head Coach:

Phone Number

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Dear Parent or Guardian:

As we begin preparing for our 2008 season, I wanted to take a few minutes to let you know what we have planned for this spring. As you know, we are having study hall each day from 3pm to 4:30. After study hall, players will report to our weight training program. We will finish each day between 6 and 6:30.

Study Hall is very important, and attendance for all players is mandatory. If a player is absent from study hall, the coaching staff must be informed before the absence. In study hall, we have tutors to help players with their homework. We hold study hall in the Library, so players will be able to complete all research assignments. We are committed to ensuring each of our players is successful in the classroom.

After study hall, we are in the weight room. Attendance is mandatory for each player. We play in a very competitive conference, and our schedule is very demanding. Our weight training program is individualized for each player. Because of our weight training program, we have reduced the number of serious injuries while preparing our athletes for college.

Additionally, we are running a leadership development program. We are working hard to develop your son so that he may be successful academically, socially, and athletically. If you have any questions about any of these programs, please contact me at your convenience. Together, we can ensure that your son has every opportunity we are all working hard to provide!

# More Than Just Football

- Be More Than Just A Coach Of A Team, Be The Director Of A Program
- Incorporate An Academic Program Into The Lives of Your Players
- Community Service Projects Build Unity





# MAKE THE GAME FUN!

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- Sometimes We Forget To Make The Game Fun
- Incorporate A Trick Play Or New Blitz Each Week
- Make Your Conditioning Program Fun!
- Incorporate Competition Into Your Conditioning And Every Drill
- Enthusiasm Is Contagious! Lead The Way

“We Are Building Winners, But  
The Least Of Our Winning Is On  
The Field”

“The Biggest Wins Are Off The  
Field, As We Develop Our  
Players Into Successful Men”

# Recap:

- Character Can and Must be Taught
- Spend Time Teaching Character- 10 minutes a day
- Coach and Correct until you reach the desired outcome
- Create Something To Hold On To
- Make the game fun, build enjoyment in doing hard work



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