



The Power of...

Positive Character

Why it Matters

Positive character is the most important asset you can have as an athlete and as a person.

Athletes who have positive character earn respect from their team and their community. They also get the most out of their natural talent.

Athletes who lack positive character never quite earn the trust of their teammates. And they never reach their full potential as athletes or as people.

Five Winning Habits

Your talent defines what you *are capable of* doing. Your character skills define what you *will do* – especially under pressure. Learn these winning habits of positive character and you will become a valued teammate and a better performer in athletics, in school, and in life beyond sports.

1. **Honor.** Positive athletes bring honor to their team. They are honest in what they say. They are ethical in what they do. They will not cheat or lie to gain an advantage. They respect their teammates, coaches, and game officials. Most importantly, positive athletes bring the same kind of honor to the classroom and their community beyond sports.
2. **Spirit.** Positive athletes bring a positive spirit to the team. They are enthusiastic. They practice and compete with intensity. They have pride in themselves and their teammates. When the going gets tough, they model the way for their teammates by staying positive no matter what.
3. **Courage.** Positive athletes bring courage to the team. They have the physical and mental courage to keep working hard when the going gets tough. They have the emotional courage to take risks and accept responsibility. And they have the ethical courage to refuse to cheat.
4. **Perseverance.** Positive athletes bring perseverance to the team. They work hard and never quit. They keep trying to master their skills even after multiple setbacks. While others are beginning to drop out or walk away, positive athletes persevere and keep going.
5. **Resilience.** Positive athletes bring resilience to the team. When they have a setback, they bounce back strong. They don't blame other people. They don't resent constructive criticism from a coach. They don't beat themselves up, either. They face the reality of their setback and figure out what they can learn from the situation. Then they look forward with confidence to their next opportunity.

These are certainly not the *only* positive character traits worth developing. But they are essential for any athlete hoping to elevate their team and get the most out of their talent.

Think About It...

1. Think of someone you know outside of sports who has positive character. What makes this person special?
2. Think of a time when you showed honor, spirit, courage, perseverance, or resilience under pressure. This could be in sports or another setting. How did you feel during and after that situation?
3. Imagine yourself as a coach recruiting two athletes of equal ability. One has a reputation for positive character. The other has a reputation for questionable character. Which athlete would you want to coach?

Take Action

- ✓ Look through the five winning habits of positive character and commit to doing one thing to strengthen your character starting right now.