



The Power of...

Positive Leadership

Why it Matters

Positive leadership is essential for success in team sports.

The coach is the primary leader who sets the direction. But every good team has one or more athletes who also provide team leadership.

The best team leaders show the way in competition, in practice, in the locker room, and in the community.

You don't need the title of captain to be an important team leader. Some of the best team leaders are role players who model the way every day.

Five Winning Habits

Your job as a positive team leader is to elevate the team in ways that build trust. Develop these winning habits of positive team leaders and you will become a valued member of any team in athletics and in life beyond sports.

1. **Model the Way.** Set a positive example for your teammates in what you do and say in competition, in practice, in the locker room, in the classroom, and in the community.
2. **Assure Execution.** Make sure you know and execute all of your team assignments. Then, reach out and assist your teammates who need help with executing their assignments.
3. **Spark the Energy.** Sense when the team is losing positive energy. Use your voice and example to spark the energy - especially when the going gets tough in practice and competition.
4. **Promote Unity.** Help everyone feel included, valued, and respected. Don't tolerate cliques or divisive conflicts on the team. Ask for help from your coaches if you see serious conflicts arising.
5. **Help Your Teammates.** Everyone struggles now and then. Reach out to help a teammate in need - especially younger athletes and role players who don't see much playing time. It is not your job to solve their problems. But it is your job to provide encouragement and friendship.

This kind of leadership can be practiced by anyone, from the team captain to the star player to the role player on the end of the bench. This same kind of leadership is valuable not only in athletics, but in all kinds of settings.

Think About It...

1. Think of someone you know inside or outside of sports who is a good leader. What makes this person special?
2. Think of a time when you showed strong leadership. This could be in sports or in another setting. How did you feel about this leadership experience?
3. Imagine yourself as a coach recruiting two athletes of equal ability. One has a reputation as a respected team leader, but the other does not. Which athlete would you want to coach?

Take Action

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