

# TEAM FOCUS

Your ability to put the team first and work together for the greater good.

## WHAT WILL YOUR COACHING CHALLENGE BE AT DIFFERENT LEVELS?

### LOW

#### Athletes at low levels will:

- Care more about themselves than the team.
- Not put forth the necessary effort needed to make their teammates better.
- Not be all that concerned about making everyone on the team feel supported.
- Be confused about their role on the team.

### HIGH

#### Athletes at high levels will:

- Care more about the team than their personal stats.
- Put forth the effort needed to make others better.
- Want to make everyone on the team feel supported.
- Understand their role on the team and how they contribute.
- Be happy helping the team succeed no matter what role they play, as long as they can give their best.

## HOW CAN YOU MOVE YOUR ATHLETES TO HIGH LEVELS?

### Coaching Tips

- **Build an Intentional Culture:**
  - ✓ Either you drive your team's culture, or it drives you. Don't make the common mistake of letting your team's culture develop on its own. It is more than a one-time discussion. It is a continual process each time you meet.
  - ✓ Work with your team to define what it means to be on the team, how you will treat each other, how the team will operate, and what success looks like (beyond just wins and losses). Post these standards for all to see.
  - ✓ Preach that a great player can win a game, but a great team can win championships.
- **Involve Everyone as Equals:**
  - ✓ Demand respect for everyone on the team, always. Correct behavior that isn't respectful.
  - ✓ Discuss how everyone's role is important regardless of how much playing time they get.
  - ✓ Plan a regular gathering outside of training that allows everyone on the team to hang out as friends.
- **You Get What You Reward:**
  - ✓ Coaches often reward/praise (e.g., game ball) athletes for what is in the stats sheet. To build an intentional culture, you need to reward behaviors that are aligned with the agreed upon cultural standards (e.g., always bringing your "A" game, treating others with respect, getting better every day).
  - ✓ Create a frequent routine of recognizing athletes for the little things that make the team stronger, such as picking each other up after a setback, helping a teammate study for test, or being supportive and positive.
  - ✓ Let the athletes recognize each other for "team first" behaviors.

### Talking Points

- Discuss the values and attitude the team considers important.
- Ask each athlete how they will hold themselves personally accountable to be the best teammate they can be.
- Examine examples of great team cultures and determine what you can borrow to build your team culture.
- Ask each athlete what he or she has done to live up to the team culture. Praise them for their efforts.

### Tools

- APP Lessons: Accepting Your Role, Team First, Be a Role Model, Keeping Your Focus
- CORE Elements: Team Player, Coachable
- PRESSURE Elements: Attention Seeker, Stubborn, Perfectionistic, People Pleaser

*"There are five fundamental qualities that make every team great: communication, trust, collective responsibility, caring and pride. I like to think of each as a separate finger on the fist. Any one individually is important. But all of them together are unbeatable."* – Mike Krzyzewski (Coach K), Duke's Legendary Basketball Coach –