LEADERSHIP GUIDE

By Life of an Athlete NH



ELEVATE YOUR TEAM

Read, understand, and commit
to living the Life of an Athlete

LIFE OF AN OWL
PURE PERFORMANCE

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"Your actions should be so dedicated that no one will ask what you want."

LIFE OF AN ATHLETE

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have been chosen as a leader or captain of your team!

This guide is provided as a reference point to use when questions or conflicts arise. Being a leader is no easy task. Leaders are bound to come across adversity and problems that must be overcome on a regular basis. This guide will help understand how to be a positive leader for the team and school. There is no one right way to be an effective, dynamic leader. By having an open mind, good communication skills and the ability to self-assess leaders will be well on their way to being successful.

Being selected as a leader is a tremendous honor and privilege. There is also a huge amount of responsibility that comes along with the "C" on the front of the jersey or patch that is worn.

Follow this guide to learn more about what it means to be a leader, how to figure out team dynamics, how to effectively communicate with the coach, and more!

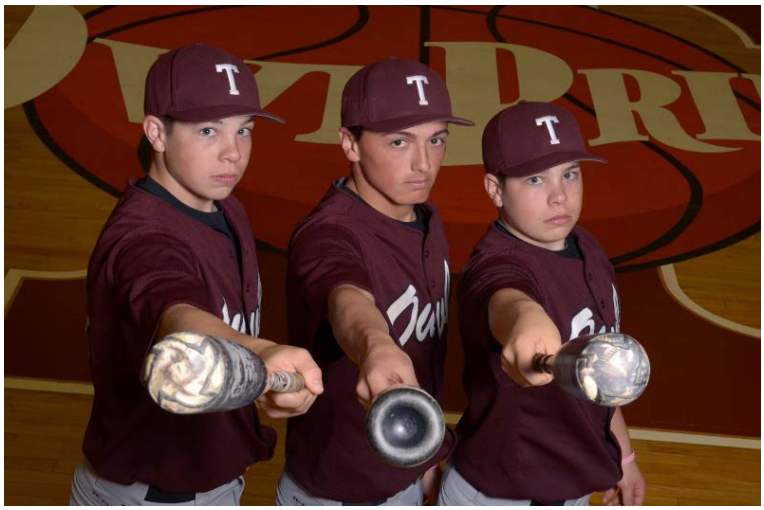
A SPECIAL THANKS TO:

- John Underwood, Founder, Life of an Athlete
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"Remember that success happens when opportunity meets hard work!"

IF YOU WANT TO WALK THE WALK,

YOU MUST TALK THE TALK.





Leaders are expected to be role models on and off the fields, rinks, and courts, and in school and their community. Wherever a student athlete may be, leaders not only represent themselves, but also their team, school, family, community, and fellow teammates.

A leader also acts as a bridge between an immediate supervisor (coach) and their fellow teammates. A leader will have to make tough decisions. The end result may not always be pleasant, but will be the right choice. There is no specific style or personality needed to be a leader, however. Those chosen to lead have already demonstrated some of the values that compel others to follow. They are the role models of their community. Role models must exemplify accessibility, desire to teach, and upstanding character.

Everyone has the ability to be a leader; there is no one right or wrong way. The most important thing is for a leader to be himself or herself and lead in a positive direction!

[1]American Athletic Institute Study, 2008

Athletes who drink are twice as likely to be injured! High school athletes who drink have a 54% injury rate compared to non-drinkers who have a 24% injury rate. [1]

LEADER'S JOB DESCRIPTION

LEADER'S CODE

- Loyalty to family, school, coaches, team and teammates;
- Compete every day with honor and integrity on and off the playing field;
- Ready to lead, willing to follow, always an agent of change;
- Be the example in ALL situations;
- Take responsibility for your actions and those of your teammates
- Excel through discipline and innovation in the classroom and during athletic events;
- Perservere and thrive on adversity;
- Train for competition, and compete to win;
- Be a role model each and every day as a student athlete leader.

LIFE OF AN ATHLETE

As a student athlete leader for the Life of an Athlete Program, you must demonstrate the ability to:

- Conduct yourself on and off the fields of play with behavior that is an example to others
- Communicate with a high level of skill
- Confront any behavior of concern or violations of athletic codes of conduct
- Act as a conduit between team and coach
- Bring any serious concerns to the attention of adult authority
- Hold team meetings to discuss lifestyle choices
- Ensure and inspire team goals and effectiveness
- Model healthy behaviors

STYLES OF LEADERSHIP

Leadership is a process of mutual influence directed at achieving purposeful results. The development of leadership begins with personal initiative and awareness, and understanding one's passion, motivations, strengths, limits, and personal values. The process of self-discovery is ongoing and the pursuit of leadership requires perseverance and a commitment to perpetual learning.[2]

Leadership styles vary. It is important for leaders to find their own style and then fine tune their strengths.

Quiet Leadership

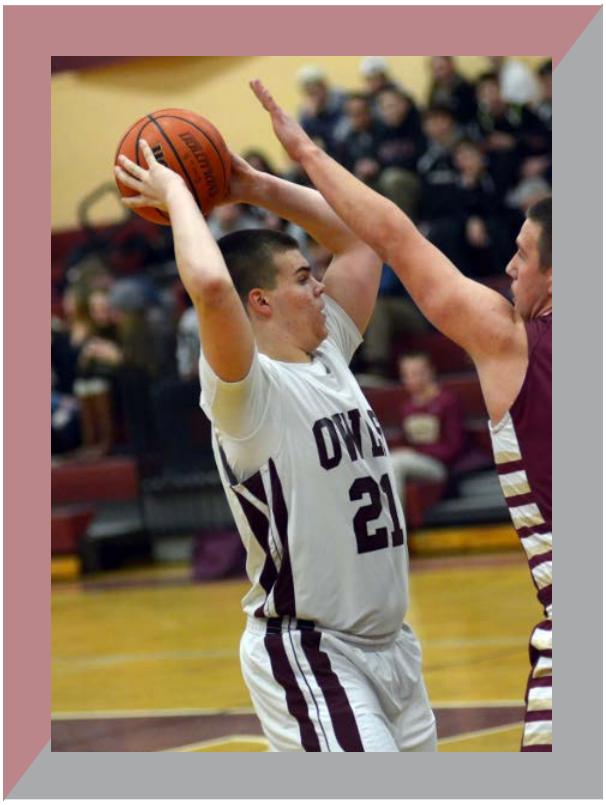
A quiet person leads by example by:

- Playing hard
- Being respectful to officials
- Staying focused during practice and games
- Performing well
- Setting the bar in the classroom
- Having confidence to take a stand on alcohol, drugs and other prohibited substances
- Making choices for nutrition and sleep based on solid statistics and studies

Vocal Leadership

A vocal person leads by working hard and verbally motivating the team by:

- Maintaining a positive atmosphere
- Setting the bar in the classroom
- Discussing choices for alcohol, drugs, and other prohibited substance
- Discussing choices for nutrition and sleep based on solid statics and studies
- Performing well



No matter what the style, everyone works toward the same message. We must make wise choices: good nutrition based on hard facts; healthy sleep habits; and zero tolerance for the use of drugs and alcohol. Student athlete leaders in the Life of an Athlete program break new ground and demonstrate the ability to change team and school cultures, which ultimately creates a healthier atmosphere in communities.

[2]Illinois Leadership Certificate Program

FOUNDATION OF A LEADER

WHY ME COACH?

Leaders are picked based on the **5 C's of leadership**:

Leaders tend to be strong in some areas, but weak in others. Leaders of the team must be willing to consistently practice in all areas of leadership. Included in this guide is a self-evaluation to assist leaders in efforts to improve in all areas on a daily basis.

THE 5 C's OF LEADERSHIP:



COMPETENCE:

Demonstrates necessary level of skill development, knowledge, fitness, and healthy behavior



CITIZENSHIP:

Demonstrates social responsibility to the team and community through commitment, teamwork, and role modeling



CHEMICAL HEALTH:

Demonstrates support for zero tolerance of drug and alcohol use, both individually and on the team



CHARACTER:

Demonstrates attitudes and behavior that relate to moralstrength, including responsibility, accountability, dedication, self-control, trustworthiness, and fair play



CIVILITY:

Shows characteristics of honesty, loyalty, enthusiasm, decisiveness, endurance, fairness, and courage

FOUNDATION OF A LEADER

The foundation of leadership starts with credibility. Once a leader has the credibility, he/she must look at the rest of these traits of a leader to maintain a positive leadership style.



INTEGRITY

INTEGRITY REQUIRES COURAGE!

Integrity is a character trait that can reflect positively on a student athlete. It is a choice of positive behavior and positive spirit. A person with integrity exemplifies truthfulness, honesty, caring about others, dependability, trust and respect. Student athletes who have integrity not only have a positive effect on a team, but they act as a role model for the whole community.

A student athlete who is living ethically and honestly can and will disagree with teammates in situations such as drinking, smoking, or other illegal activities. Having integrity could mean that you are the only person in a group who is taking an ethical stand. It may be intimidating, but living life with integrity will ALWAYS pay off in many ways![3]

LIVING WITH INTEGRITY MEANS:

- Not settling for less than you know you deserve from your relationships
- Asking for what you want and need from others
- Speaking the truth, even though it might create conflict or tension
- Behaving in ways that are in harmony with your personal values[4]

[3]Champions of Character: Part 3- Integrity,
National Association of Intercollegiate Athletes)

[4]Barbara De Angelis, best-selling author of self-help books

"Remember when you are not training, somewhere, someone is training; and when you meet him, he will beat you."

INTEGRITY

WITHOUT IT YOU'RE GOING NOWHERE



A STUDENT ATHLETE WITH INTEGRITY:

- Keeps commitments.
- Tells the truth.
- Takes a stand for what's right– even when it's not popular.
- Has a strong sense of self.
- Respects others, their beliefs and their skills.
- Demonstrates dedication to a code of ethics.
- Has inner strengths.
- Associates with people who have strong morals.
- Lends a helping hand.
- Has discipline and self-control.

POSITIVE VS NEGATIVE LEADERSHIP

POSITIVE LEADERSHIP

- Understands the power of teamwork and uses it in solving problems
- Is coaching oriented
- Uses teammates' knowledge and opinions to make decisions
- Shares the team's vision
- Teaches team to be self-reliant
- Models teamwork and concern for the greater good
- Creates and communicates values first
- Knows giving up control yields the best outcomes
- Focuses on achieving performance outcomes
- Helps team to learn from errors
- Uses leadership characteristics to make decisions

NEGATIVE LEADERSHIP

- Needs to have and use own answers
- Is authoritative
- Makes decisions by oneself and does not care about others opinions
- Pushes for results
- Teaches team to expect direction
- Is concerned about self first
- Produces reports first
- Is afraid of losing control
- Focuses on finding and fixing their own problem
- Quick to punish for mistakes
- Uses rules to make decisions



CONDUCT ON AND OFF THE FIELD

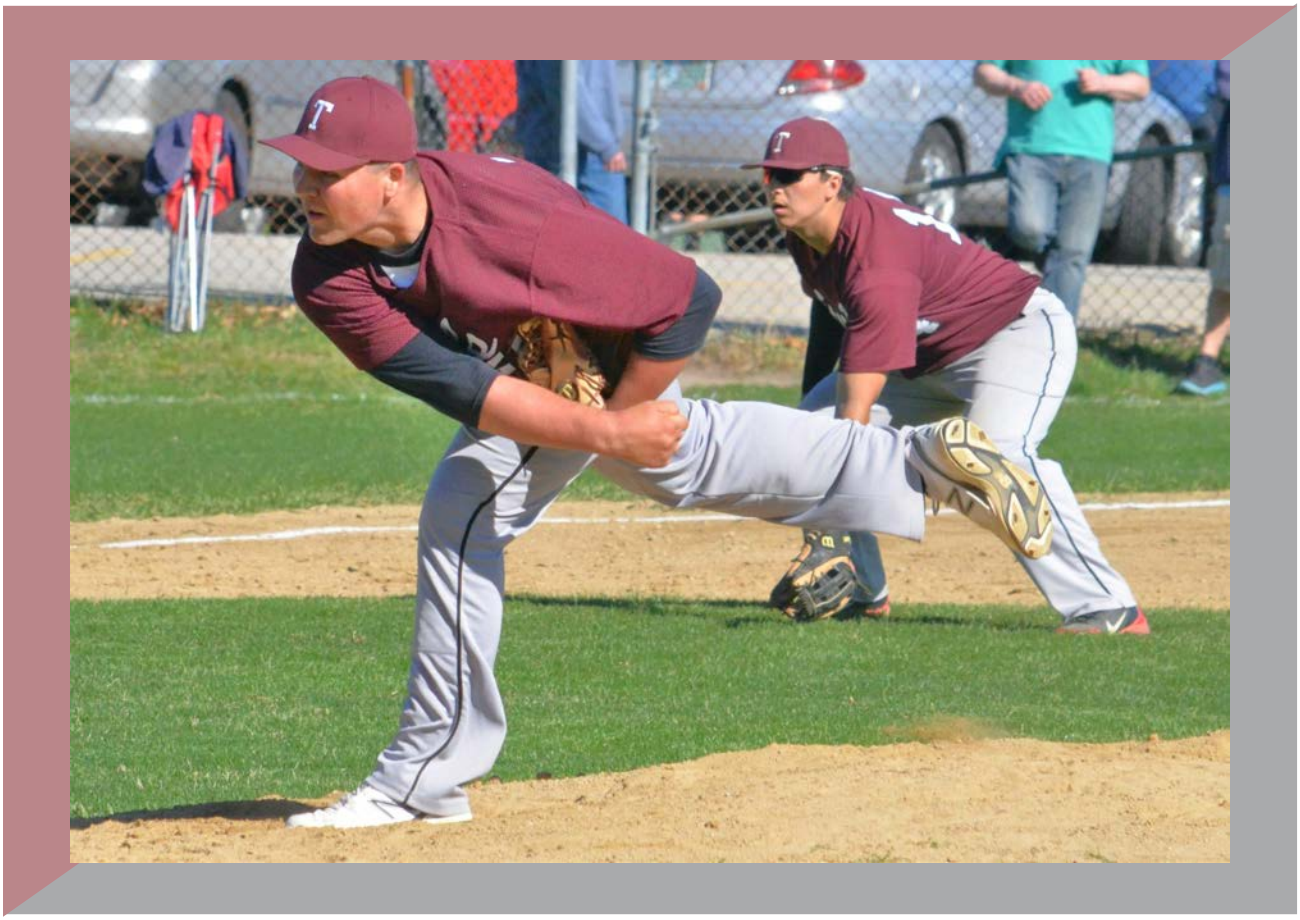


As student athletes, it is important to be respectful in every situation. Student athletes will experience adversity through various situations. As leaders, it is important to act in a way that shows composure, respect, and caring to all other parties involved. Tensions may be high on the field, court, or rink during play, but leaders of the team must be
CALM, COOL, AND COLLECTED.

THIS INCLUDES, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO:

- Picking teammates and opposing players up off the ground if they have fallen
- Shaking hands with opposing teams after the game
- Refraining from trash talking
- Refraining from taunting
- Keeping other teammates under control
- Respecting coaches
- Being respectful to fans
- Accepting an officials call, even if you disagree with it
- Thanking officials after games
- Respecting teachers, administrators, parents and others in your community
- Getting involved in school community service projects and groups

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COACH

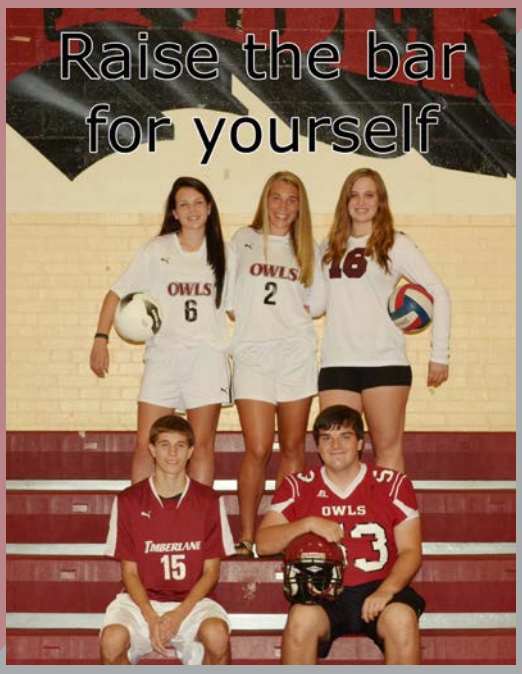


A leader's ability to develop a relationship with the coach and his or her teammates is crucial to the team's success. Remember a key point from a previous statement: "A leader is the bridge between the coach and their teammates, but the coach will always have the final decision. To be successful, every part of the team must be on the same page, from the coach all the way to the practice players."

COACH/LEADER SUGGESTIONS:
Set mutual expectations and goals:

- List the process to address problems and establish a chain of command
- Review job description
- Set a daily meeting time
- Maintain respectful communication to ensure mutual trust
- Set Coach/Leader boundaries to prevent "preferential treatment"

RELATIONSHIP WITH TEAMMATES



Establishing the relationship between team leaders and teammates is one of the most critical steps in leadership. Team leaders need to understand that as leaders they MUST embrace "ALL" and cannot do the job alone. The more teammates who are empowered in the decision making process or the operation of the team, the stronger the team will be. In any situation, a team that functions as one unit will be more successful than a team that has multiple groups trying to work together.

STAY RESPECTFUL & POSITIVE

There is no team without a team leader, just like there is not a leader without a team.

ITS ALL ABOUT BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

WE not **I**

OURS not **MINE**

US not **ME**

WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER!

THINGS TO REMEMBER:

LEADERSHIP is not about a position or title

LEADERSHIP is about relationships and credibility

LEADERSHIP is not about personality, but rather behavior

LEADERSHIP is a dialogue, not a monologue

GO OUT and **INSPIRE** this season!!

[1]American Athletic Institute Study,2008

High school athletes lose 15%-30% from their overall performance when they drink.[1]

TEAM DYNAMICS

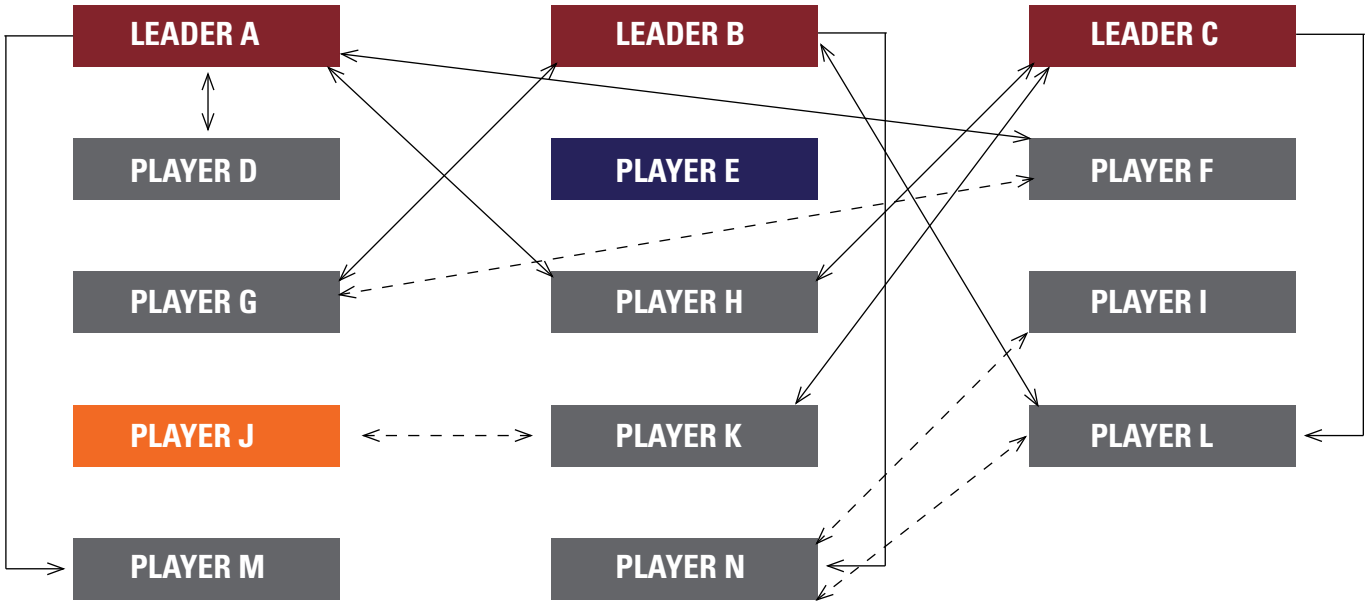
Co-leaders must be on the same page when addressing the team on or off fields/courts. Disagreements are OK, but before the team is addressed, all leaderss must walk the same walk and talk the same talk. Once all the leaders involved have discussed each other's strengths and weaknesses, it is time to find out about team dynamics. Break down the team by class/name and try to figure out who is connected to whom. This becomes important because when problems or obstacles arise, leaders are prepared to empower the appropriate teammates to help solve the issue at hand. Leadership is not telling people what to do, it is empowering them to do what needs to get done.

After figuring out the team dynamics, sit with the coach to develop a realistic, attainable team goal (vision) together. One important thing to remember when looking at your connections is that the person with NO connections should be the FIRST person reached out to by leaders (see Player E below).

In the graphic below there are tri-leaders. Each leader has a relationship with other individual players on the team (solid line). Some players on the team may have relationships with other players on the team already (dotted line) but not the leaders. If a problem arises it is the responsibility of the leaders to work together to figure out the relationships on the team (team dynamics) to best address the situation.

Question: Player J has been skipping school to hang out with friends. As leaders how would you address this problem with Player J?

Answer: Leader C would work with Player K, who has a connection with Player J to address the problem at hand.



CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS

- The athlete should discuss the issue within the team. The team leader may facilitate the discussion and offer to go to the coach with the athlete in conflict.
- The representative of that grade should attempt to resolve any issues.
- If the conflict can not be resolved between the athlete and the coach, the athlete should make an appointment to meet with the director of athletics.
- If the problem is still unresolved, the athlete's parent should contact the coach.
- The parent should contact the director of athletics ONLY when the problem cannot be resolved with the coach.

OFF LIMITS!

Topics that will not be discussed include:

1) Playing time

2) Discussions about other athletes

3) Game strategies

In the event that there is a serious conflict or communication inability between two parties, the process would proceed to the next level listed below.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION STEPS

1. ATHLETE – TEAM LEADER
2. ATHLETE – COACH
3. ATHLETE & COACH – ATHLETIC DIRECTOR
4. PARENT – COACH
5. PARENT – ATHLETIC DIRECTOR
6. PARENT – PRINCIPAL
7. PARENT – SUPERINTENDENT
8. PARENT – BOARD OF EDUCATION

TEAMMATE INTERVENTION

Behavior of Concern Process

The behavior of concern process is prevention-based and helps deal with situations of concern that arise in team settings. It is a positive intervention method that builds a bridge rather than a barrier to those involved in behaviors of concern. It is a highly successful way to confront in a constructive manner.



First step is to think… if you have time to think.

Clarify your thoughts and feelings about the individuals and the situation.
Try not to act when emotional.
Assess the seriousness of the situation. "Can I handle this?"
Identify appropriate actions. "Will I need to involve others?"



I CARE

Tell them how much you care about them and your team!



I SEE

Share your concern specifically… Do not be judgmental.



I FEEL

Share how you feel about the situation.



I LISTEN

Let them respond and listen to what they have to say.



I WANT

Tell them what you want them to do.



I WILL

Follow through and stand by the Athletic Codes of Conduct and inform the coach or athletic director.

TEAMMATE INTERVENTION

Identifying "Red Flag" Behaviors

Recognizing that it is not uncommon for athletes to display some questionable or inappropriate behaviors, "red flag" behaviors are those questionable, suspicious, or inappropriate behaviors that go beyond what seems normal or reasonable for the situation. "Red flag" behaviors may be presented through a student's appearance, spoken or written words, or specific actions. Leaders should never display any of these behaviors. If a teammate is displaying these behaviors, the leader must confront the teammate to help fix the issue at hand.



Examples of "red flag" behaviors include:

- Behaviors that regularly interfere with athletic environment or management
- Out of character behaviors
- Negative influence on younger athletes
- Criminality
- Poor training methods
- Lack of readiness to train / compete
- Poor lifestyle choices, e.g., sleep, diet, social drug use
- Lack of concern for others
- Lack of concern for outcomes (winning or losing)
- Notable change in academic performance – poor or inconsistent preparation
- Notable change in behavior or appearance
- Impairment of thoughts – verbal or written
- Overly aggressive behaviors toward others; inability to set limits or re-direct focus
- Poor decision-making and coping skills
- Inappropriate or strange behavior
- Bad attitude/mood
- Low frustration tolerance/ short fuse
- Overreaction to circumstances
- Lack of resiliency / failure to bounce back
- Writings and comments endorsing violence; unusual interest in violence
- Indirect or direct threats in writings or verbalizations
- Lack of empathy and concern for others; inability to care
- Anger management problems
- Threats to others
- Appearance of being overly nervous, tense or emotional
- Expression of suicidal thoughts or feelings of hopelessness

LEADERSHIP MEETINGS

To have successful meetings, the right individuals must be at the table. The people crucial to have in this regular meeting are the coach(s), leader(s) and representatives from each grade in high school. Once this team is created, it is important to meet on a weekly basis to set the tone of the team and address any problems that may be preventing the team from its goals. The idea of the leadership table is to give the leaders and students ownership of the team. By giving them ownership, the student athletes will care more about the team and will have more drive to succeed.

LEADERSHIP TABLE



[1]American Athletic Institute Study,2008

One night of binge drinking eliminates the impact of two weeks of training. [1]

LEADERSHIP MEETINGS

It is always important for team leaders to have realistic goals that can be attained with reachable benchmarks. For every team, the ultimate goal is winning the championship; however, it is important to recognize it takes a long road to get there. It is crucial for leaders to outline attainable benchmarks that will lead to smaller successes along the way to the ultimate success of winning the state championship! Below is an example of a realistic set of increments that will lead a team to winning the state championship.



WHAT ELSE CAN I LEARN?



APPRECIATE TEAMMATES: They don't care who the leader is, how much they know, or how good they are until they know how much the leader cares about them. Without appreciation for everyone on the team, nobody will ever be a successful leader.

VALUE ALL TEAMMATES: Include all teammates in team functions and team meetings.

RESPECT YOUR TEAMMATES: Although guidance is sometimes necessary, the thoughts and decisions of every teammate are important.

UNDERSTAND INDIVIDUAL WORTH: From the starter to the practice player, never make any teammate's contribution second class. Show and teach them their worth!

CLARIFY RULES: Help other teammates understand their individual role and the importance of that role in the team's success.

*Photo Credit: Jamie Roach / Shutterstock.com

WHAT ELSE CAN I LEARN?

CARE ABOUT TEAMMATES: Solid leaders of great teams are aware of all of their teammates' actions on and off the field.

TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITIES: Make time for team building activities, which are important because they help form relationships with teammates.

SPORTSMANSHIP: A team leader's responsibility is to ensure that the team keeps its composure on the field/court. It is important to manage emotions in the "heat of battle." Remember, SPORTSMANSHIP has nothing to do with athletic talent or ability; however, it is a direct reflection of LEADERSHIP.

STUDENT BODY: Every member of the student body is a potential teammate or fan. Treat the student body no differently than the team you lead. Get to know other team leaders. Learning to support each other makes all team leaders better leaders.

COMMUNITY: As a student athlete leader you are a representative of your team, school, and community on and off the athletic fields. Leaders are always under the microscope. The youth in the community look up to leaders. Get involved with a community service project, and make choices that model positive behaviors. The help leaders provide will always be appreciated in the community and can open many doors that could lead to further success on and off the athletic fields.



FAST FACTS ON LIFESTYLE CHOICES

Proper Nutrition

2-4 hours before competition eat a small carbohydrate rich snack, including a small about of fast-acting protein as well.

During competitions, make sure to stay hydrated with at least 10 oz. of a watered down sports drink mixture. (50/50 ratio)

Within 5-10 minutes after work-outs, take in fast-acting protein to repair damaged muscles and a small amount of carbohydrates for energy.

Within an hour after work-outs, eat a healthy meal consisting of 1/2 the plate of vegetables or fruits, 1/4 complex carbohydrates, and 1/4 slow-acting protein.

Proper nutritional recovery is the single most critical factor on whether training has had a positive effect.

Highest rates of nutrient uptake needed to grow occur during the first 10 minutes after training.

An athlete's body recovers 70% during the first hour after competition.

Train Properly

7AM-11AM workouts lead to more muscle gain than any other time of day.

Perform full body exercises rather than isolated muscle exercises.

Get Proper Rest

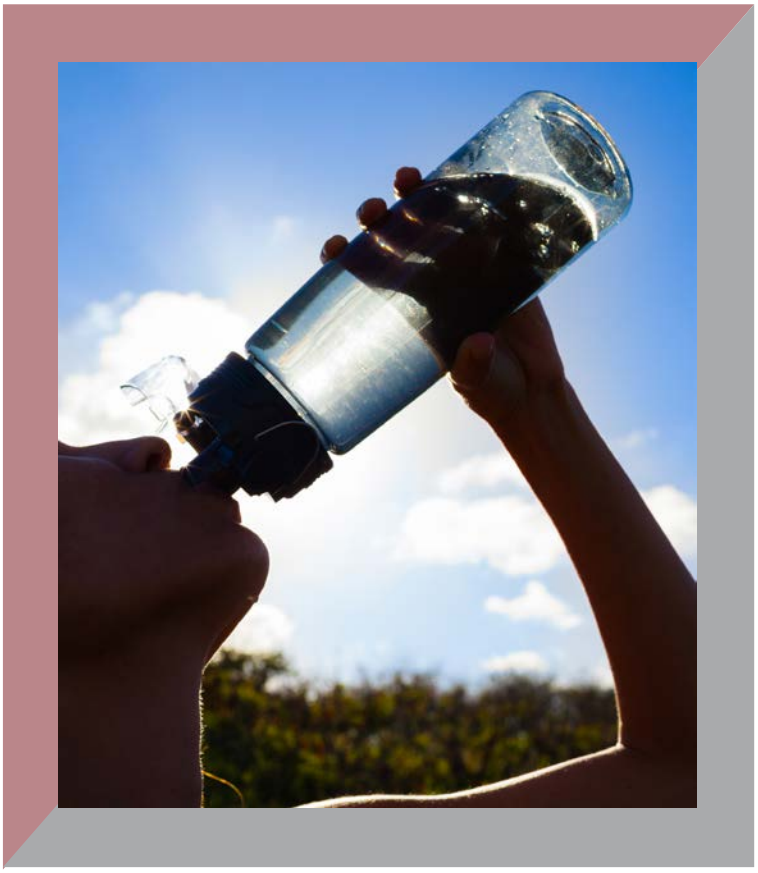
8-10 hours of sleep each night is necessary to recover properly.

Sleep restriction reduces blood flow to parts of the brain that impact an athlete's pre-movement, movement, and balance, which decreases reaction time.

Stay off electronics 1-2 hours before bed.

Avoid Energy Drinks

Energy drinks give a false sense of stimulation to the central nervous system, which can cause chronic fatigue.



THE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND OTHER DRUGS ON PERFORMANCE

HIGHLIGHTS

We can simply say, "It doesn't happen to my team," or we can do the things that will make the difference on your team...

According to research done at the American Athletic Institute:

- Alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (ATOD) interfere with your physical and mental ability.
- Over half of student athletes who indicated that they used alcohol in the past year said they began using it before the age of 18.
- The majority of those reporting alcohol usage report drinking fewer than two days per week.
- Approximately 49% of those reporting alcohol usage report consuming five or more drinks in one sitting.
- 54% of the respondents indicated drinking during both competitive and off-seasons.
- The majority of respondents indicated obtaining alcohol from a friend, family member, or teammate.
- The average age New Hampshire youth begin drinking alcohol is 13.6 years.
- Athletes who drink are twice as likely to be injured (54.8%) as non-drinkers (24.8%).



- Olympic-level athletes lose over 11% from their overall performance when they drink alcohol, while high school and college athletes lose 15-30% from their overall performance.
- Reaction time can be reduced up to 38% when using ATOD. This translates to how quickly you get off the line, off a starting block, swing a bat, or block a shot.
- The use of ATOD interferes with training, recovery, and adaption effect. A body trying to rid itself of ATOD cannot heal or recover as quickly because of the reduction of HGH and testosterone.
- Consumption of alcohol reduces blood flow to the brain which decreases athletic performance by weakening speed, agility, strength, and concentration.

LEADERSHIP EVALUATION[5]

Using a scale of one to five, rank yourself as a team leader on the following 28 questions

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Undecided 4 Agree 5 Strongly Agree

HOW I SEE MYSELF AS A LEADER

- ☐ I am one of the hardest workers on the team.
- ☐ I care deeply about the team's success.
- ☐ I am a competitive person who strives to win.
- ☐ I have confidence in myself as a person and my ability to be a leader.
- ☐ I perform in pressure situations.
- ☐ I bounce back quickly following mistakes and losses.
- ☐ I stay calm and composed in pressure situations.
- ☐ I stay focused when faced with distractions, obstacles, and adversity.
- ☐ I keep my anger and frustration under control.
- ☐ I constantly do the right thing on and off the court/field.
- ☐ I am honest and trustworthy.
- ☐ I treat teammates, coaches and others with respect.

HOW I SEE MY TEAMMATES AS A LEADER

- ☐ I reach out to teammates when they need help.
- ☐ I take the time to listen to teammates.
- ☐ I regularly encourage my teammates to do their best.
- ☐ I regularly compliment my teammates when they succeed.
- ☐ I communicate optimism and hope when the team is struggling.
- ☐ I know what to say to teammates when they are struggling.
- ☐ I have developed an effective relationship with each teammate.
- ☐ I am a team player who seeks to unify the team.

IMPORTANT: Remember this is just an evaluation and shows where there is opportunity for growth as a leader.

[5]American Athletic Institute Leadership Evaluation (Adapted from Janssen 2005)

LEADERSHIP EVALUATION

Using a scale of one to five, rank yourself as a team leader on the following 28 questions

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Undecided 4 Agree 5 Strongly Agree

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR ME AND TEAM

- ☐ I hold teammates accountable for following team rules and standards.
- ☐ I constructively confront teammates when necessary.
- ☐ I am willing to address and minimize conflicts between teammates.
- ☐ I am firm, fair, and direct when dealing with conflicts and problems.

CHEMICAL HEALTH ISSUES

- ☐ I am committed to ensure that our team is drug free at all times.
- ☐ I will confront any team member who uses drugs.
- ☐ I will discuss chemical health issues with my teammates.
- ☐ I am willing to bring drug use issues to the coach's attention.

TOTAL SCORE:_____

"Me as a Leader" This self-evaluation measures critical areas you need to have to be an effective leader. To compute your personal leader score, add your ratings for the first 12 questions.

12–44= Not a leader

45–52= Solid leader

53–60= Spectacular leader

The total for the "Me as a Leader" section should at least be 45 or higher. Anything 44 and below you are not successfully leading enough to earn the respect of your teammates. The closer the score is to 60, the more you are capable of leading.

"Team Leader" The total score for all 28 questions will give you your leader's rating as an assertive leader

34–99= Not an assertive leader

100–121= Solid assertive leader

122–140= Spectacular assertive leader

IMPORTANT: Remember this is just an evaluation and shows where there is opportunity for growth as a leader.

LIFE OF AN ATHLETE



Thank you for reading Life of an Athlete's Leadership Guide. Our goal is to empower the leaders of New Hampshire high schools to lead in a positive direction. With your help, as leaders, we will be able to change the climate in the NHIAA member schools.

There are no guarantees that great leadership will equal a state championship, but great leaders will inspire others to rise and take advantage of the life lessons being taught on a daily basis.

NHIAA | LIFE OF AN ATHLETE

Donna Arias (Program Director)
darias@nhiaa.org

251 Clinton St.
Concord, NH 03301
603.228.8671 ph
603.225.7978 fax

www.nhiaa.org | www.loanh.org

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