



CREATING BUY-IN TO YOUR PROGRAM

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CREATING BUY-IN TO YOUR PROGRAM

- This generation gets a bad rap for its inability to commit.
 - The process of buy-in has not changed much since past generations.
 - Greatest difference is in past generations you could have success without buy-in. Students/Athletes would do something because “the coach said to”. For better or worse, this is now the exception.
 - This means creating buy-in is more important than ever!

CREATING BUY-IN TO YOUR PROGRAM

- Coaches need a direction (if we don't have one, they won't)
 - Why do you coach?
 - What do you hope to teach your athletes?
 - What do you want the culture of your team to be?
 - What do you want people to say about your team?
- Ask these (and other) questions. Talk about these things with peer coaches.
 - I have gained more from friends that coach other sports b/c it makes me think about my sport differently.

CREATING BUY-IN TO YOUR PROGRAM

- Process Driven vs. Results Driven
 - Process Driven: The direction of the program is based on tenants and standards that are to be pursued but are never fully accomplished.
 - Character Traits (i.e. accountability, responsibility, preparation, etc.)
 - Very little discussion about results. Greatest focus is placed on controlling the variables we can control.
 - Success can be framed as something that is in the athlete's control and is most likely something that can continually be improved up in incremental steps. (i.e. an athlete's preparation for a season can be improved upon in each subsequent year and the yearly improvement is seen as part of the success of the season).
 - Full disclosure, this is my default. Probably 50% of my team prefers this over results.

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- Process Driven vs. Results Driven
 - Results Driven: The direction of the program is based on objective standards that can be pursued and measured.
 - The process is still present here, but emphasis is placed on results. Did we win a state championship? Did I run a certain time or place at a certain spot?
 - With athletes' current levels of performance and competitive anxiety, I wonder if this is as broadly applicable as in past generations?
 - For me, this is best used on an individual basis with those athletes that are driven differently from their peers. I would say 10-15% of my team prefers this over process driven.

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- Process Driven vs. Results Driven
 - Combination of the two may work best?
 - Provides opportunity to teach through the pursuit of team standards, but also provides a framework to show the value of the process.
 - I also feel it provides the opportunity to develop our athletes in such a way that they learn to manage their competitive anxiety and results driven disappointments.
 - At the end of the day, we are judged on results, but hopefully desire to have a longer lasting impact that wins and losses. Having a direction for yourself and your athletes that can encompass both process and results can hopefully help us to create a type of buy-in that provides opportunities for both personal growth and winning results.

CREATING BUY-IN TO YOUR PROGRAM

- I utilize a theme that changes from year to year:
 - I work to incorporate past years themes throughout our team meetings
 - Like Math, we teach addition and then come back in subsequent years and continue to touch on it. Our old athletes are reminded of the importance of the past process driven goals and new athletes are gradually introduced to it.
 - If it was important then, why isn't it now?
- I utilize the same 6-7 themes and cycle through them every few years.
 - New to everyone after four years.
 - I get better explaining and teaching them in subsequent years.
 - Old themes that are touched on each year are then more readily absorbed when introduced as the official theme.
 - All the themes point to a few major directions/tenants that reflect my direction and desires for the teams.

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- Examples of my most recent themes:
 - 2018: Set Apart: Pursuing an uncommon goal together
 - 2017: More than Conquerors
 - 2016: Perseverance, Character, Hope
 - 2015: Preparation Precedes Performance
 - 2013: A Common Purpose
 - 2012: Embrace the Process
 - 2011: Do Hard Things

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- My Process: has remained pretty steady since 2011.
 - Start with small group (captains?)
 - 3-4x45:00 meetings.
 - Identify what were strengths and weaknesses of the past year.
 - What should we focus on for the upcoming year
 - Both of these can be objective or subjective (team unity, summer preparation, place higher as a team, etc.).
 - I take these meetings and turn them into a document, which we go over after each meeting and refine. It has categories with 3-5 strengths and weaknesses of past year and 3-5 items to focus on for upcoming year.

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- My Process: continued
 - Small group of athletes take this document and have one meeting with rest of team.
 - Present it and ask for feedback which may cause the document to be adjusted.
 - This meeting also serves a dual purpose in that the small group is seen as liaisons between the coach/team and the small group start to see themselves as part of the accountability process (they now have skin in the game).
 - Goal of this process:
 - Control the number of voices trying to provide direction to the team
 - Get the small leadership group 100% invested in the direction as well as implementing
 - Give entire team opportunity for input → This provides you a platform for all future discussions in a team setting.

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- Utilizing this document during the season:
 - I refer to this document (directly or indirectly) in nearly every email or team meeting from the spring through the season.
 - If goal is better preparation, we communicate that regularly during the summer. If goal is improved GPA, that is part of our meetings (team and individual) throughout the Fall.
 - Premeet meetings and Postmeet meetings
 - This also provides a framework for cultural discussions that (hopefully) preclude disciplinary discussions.



CREATING BUY-IN TO YOUR PROGRAM

- Takes time, effort, and vision from you.
 - Time is what is in short supply for all of you.
 - We put the work in on the front or back end
 - Team that has good culture is fun to work with and has less stress to coach.
- Last four years at Dordt we have remade the men's team.
 - Use to be a lot of work with little pay-off
 - Now is very little work.



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- Talent helps, but talent working together is what we all hope for!