Transactional coaches merely interact and instruct with their athletes. They transmit information, they teach skills, and they lead teams in competition. They handle the organizational stuff for the team, and they seem to invest little if anything beyond completing the transaction. In my experience I see more “transactional coaches” in our high schools, and in our youth programs.

Reasons:

1. Time commitment – coaching is a huge time commitment, just to do the basics.
2. Lack of passion – they are coaching because “they should”. They were always a star athlete, and they can no longer compete, do what is next, coaching.
3. Burnout – after so many seasons of dealing with the trivial, time consuming things a head coach deals with, they develop burnout, and can’t find the energy or desire to do more than is necessary.
4. Ego – coaches coach because they are all about “ME”. They are in it for the personal accolades they might receive or the adulation
5. Shortage of coaches – many parks and rec coaches are volunteers that step up because there are not enough Dads to help coach all the kids. They have no desire or experience. They are overwhelmed and are a “warm body” filling a need.
6. Old School – they were raised years ago, when the tougher you were as a coach, the meaner you were, the more you were viewed as a “good” head coach. They are usually all about winning and winning at all cost
7. Don’t know how to do it different…. lack of role models. We are not doing a good job of raising good coaches. Things are changing but slowly.

What it takes to be a transformational coach?

1. Emotional investment in the lives of your athletes
2. TIME
3. Old adage…”they don’t care what you know until they know that you care”. Establishing that relationship with your athletes is more important than proving you know your X’s and O’s
4. Creativity
5. Vision – ability to see beyond your season. You must be able to look years into the future and realize that moments you are a part of now, will likely shape how these young men and women handle life as employees, husbands, wives, moms and dads
6. Must have a mission statement for:
   1. Team
   2. Self as a coach
   3. Athletes
   4. Life
7. Purpose – every coach must have a purpose above winning. Define what your purpose is and then get your team to “buy in”

Although many kids think they will compete beyond high school (59%), few actually do, ( 2 out of 100). EVERY ONE of your high school athletes will go on to become employees. Many will become husbands/wives, and many will become Moms and Dads. They will all become citizens of this world, fighting the daily battles of life, such as unemployment, divorce, financial troubles, failure, etc.…. They will have friendships that become difficult to navigate. They will have confrontations at work that require communication and humility. They will have struggles in their jobs and In their homes where they will need to self reflect, assess what they have done well and what they need to do better. They will fail and will have to bounce back and keep moving forward. They will suffer major setbacks and will have to come up with plans B, C, and maybe even D, E and F. They will face temptation and influence to make poor choices. They will witness others making poor choices and will have to decide what to do with that. All of these “life lessons” are things that kids learn in sports, with a transformational coach. Not a coach that is merely conducting a transaction. Where is your best investment…. coaching to those 2 out of 100 that will play college sports. Or coaching to those other 98, to prepare them to be better people and to be better prepared for life! And what do you know, when you coach to those 98, you actually get the other 2 as well. And believe it or not, but coaching this way, you build trust, you instill work ethics, you build resilience, you build self-esteem and character. You build mental toughness and you inspire kids to be better than they would otherwise settle for. All of these things then make your team stronger, your athletes better on the field and ultimately you will build a successful program by any and ALL accounts.

Now, how do I get started? What can I do different? What does it “look” like to be a transformational coach?

How do we develop a Transformational Team?

1. Begins with the Head Coach
   1. Why do you coach?
   2. Define Success…
   3. Establish personal mission and vision statement
   4. Establish TEAM mission and vision statement
   5. CORE Covenants
   6. Inspire!
2. Coaching Staff
   1. Communicate your mission and vision for team
   2. Get their “buy in”, or “move on”
   3. Give them ownership
   4. Hire Character before talent – easier to teach sport
3. Team Leadership
   1. Captains, leaders without a title, etc.
   2. Student leaders are more effective than coaches
   3. Age doesn’t matter – pick the best leaders
4. Implementation
   1. Parent Meeting
   2. Team Meeting at start of season
   3. Core Covenants
   4. Code of Conduct
   5. Establish expectations early on!
5. Team becomes TEAM
   1. Stress importance/value of EVERY one on the team
      1. Tool box, water bucket, links of chain
   2. Daily reminders of team goals and values
      1. Banners, team cheer, team huddles
   3. Team ‘kyle will workouts’
   4. Social Media (FB, Twitter, email)
   5. Involve Parents – pasta feeds
6. Make the Commitment!!
   1. Must be 100%, no part way. Either you are in or you are not!
7. Success Stories
   1. Lou Holtz, Tom Landry, Tony Dungy, Joe Erhmann

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