

Twellman Soccer Choose to be Great

Understanding that your season is well underway we feel this is perfect time as coaches to evaluate our roles and the impact you are having on these young persons lives.

The characteristics and ability of you, as the coach, plays a major role in determining the quality of each child's soccer experience. Coaches who are organized create effective learning environments, coaches who are familiar with methods for teaching the game promote learning, and coaches who are supportive build confidence and self-esteem. While this is hardly new information, if you are not yourself an experienced coach it may be difficult to determine until after the fact how well you, the coach, did. What these few questions provide are ways to objectively assess you at this time of the season. This will help you make better decisions as you continue your season.

Please keep in mind; the coach of an undefeated team may be doing damage to his player's abilities and psychological fitness. Coaches who understand their players, the environment and who are qualified to teach the great game of soccer are successful coaches.

This is the perfect time to take a look at your strengths and weaknesses.

- Did I demonstrate ample knowledge of the game of soccer?
- Am I running organized practice sessions?
- Are all players enjoying practices?
- The player's ball skills have improved while playing under my direction.
- The players understanding of the game has improved.
- I have communicated well with the children.
- I have communicated well with the parents.
- I have been a positive role model for these kids.
- During games, I have acted in a professional manner.
- The children enjoyed playing in games under my direction.
- I have provided adequate positive feedback to my players.
- My expectations of the parents were clearly communicated.
- My expectations of each child were clearly communicated.
- I treated all players equally and fairly.
- Will the players want to play for you next season?

We are always available to help in anyway we can....email us at [**twellmansoccer@gmail.com**](mailto:twellmansoccer@gmail.com)

We have also included a very good article ...a great read for all of us as coaches

Choose Your Role, Then Choose to be Great

By

Dan Coughlin

Recently I completed a wonderful three-year experience of being an assistant coach for a boys club soccer team. The players went from being 10-year-old boys to 13-year-old young men who were extremely hard-working, supportive of one another, and respectful to themselves, their teammates, their parents, and their coaches. In so many ways, they were an ideal team to work with. Whenever I hear someone say something stupid like, “Teenagers aren’t what they used to be,” or “Kids today cause so many problems” I want to introduce them to these 17 young men, and that will set them straight.

At the end-of-the-year pizza party after I thanked the parents for raising such great kids and told the players how proud of them I was and how much I enjoyed coaching them and how excited I was to see what will happen for them over the next 30 years, I closed with these thoughts:

CHOOSE TO BE GREAT AND PRACTICE OUTSIDE OF PRACTICE

“As you know from time to time I like to try to give you some advice. So I would like to close this season with this advice for you. Whatever you do in life, you choose it, don’t let someone else choose it for you. If you’re going to be a doctor, lawyer, engineer, teacher, coach, or whatever you end up doing, you choose it. Then once you choose it, choose to be great. Get into the details and stay focused. We talk about staying focused in practice all the time. Stay focused in whatever you choose to be in life.

“For example, if you choose to be a high school soccer player, then choose to be great. That means ‘practice outside of practice.’ There are thousands of soccer players in 8th Grade, they all practice twice a week, and they all play games. However, the great high school soccer players practice outside of practice. For example, if you juggle a ball for one minute you can touch it 50 times. If you juggle a ball for 20 minutes, you can touch it 1,000 times. If you juggle a ball every day for 20 minutes for an entire year and you never miss a day, you will touch it 365,000 times. If you do that, you will have the best touch on the ball of almost anybody on your team. If you seriously practice dribbling for 10 minutes every day for a year, you will be one of the best dribblers. If you seriously practice shooting for 10 minutes every day for a year, you will have one of the best shots on the team. So if you choose to play soccer in high school, then choose to be great, which means practice outside of practice. Thanks for a great year. You have been a joy to be around at every practice and every game.”

IMPLICATIONS FOR LEADERS

Then I started thinking about what this means for adults. I actually think it means a lot if you want to be a leader in your organization.

First, keep the joy and the passion of being a teenager pursuing a dream. It’s so easy after the first few months in a new position to lose the spark, but remember that great performers bring

tremendous enthusiasm to their tasks each day. They want to perform at a higher level. They have a purpose inside of them that is driving them to get better.

Second, clearly decide what your role is going to be within the organization. You may not get to choose your title, but you do get to choose the role you're going to try to perform. Are you going to be an organizer, an empathetic listener, an effective storyteller, an inspiration, a facilitator, a visionary, an example of what you want to see in others? What role are you going to take on to make a real difference in your organization?

Third, once you choose your role, then choose to be great. I define greatness as doing an activity as well as you can do it while learning how to do it better the next time. I know this is an unusual definition of greatness, but think about what it implies. It means greatness is a process. You can be great every time you do an activity, but you can't be born with greatness by this definition. To be great, by this definition, requires application of your best effort each time you do the activity and it requires constant learning every time you do it. Now imagine if you did that every day. If you did your role to the very best of your ability each time AND each time you learned how to do it better the next time, then eventually you would be among the very best in the world at what you were doing. Eventually other people would recognize you as being great at what you're doing.

Fourth, in order to truly become great at your particular role you will have to 'practice outside of practice.' For example, if you want to become a great leader in your organization, you may very well need to volunteer for hundreds of hours in leadership positions in community activities outside of work in order to really hone and constantly improve those leadership skills for a work situation. That way when you really need them in a big "game" at work, you will be ready.

CONCLUSION

Volunteering is such a powerful way to learn about life. Step away from your paid work and get involved in the lives of people in your community. I learned so much more from these boys than they learned from me.

In the end, what I learned from watching them over a three-year period of time is that whatever you want to be in life you have to choose it and then it's up to you whether or not you choose to be great at it. Greatness is available all the time to everyone because it means doing the activity as well as you can do it right now while learning how to do it better the next time. Greatness isn't how you compare to others. It's about your best effort and your willingness to learn how to do better the next time.

If you do that over an extended period of time, then eventually other people will actually call the performance great. Of course, then the key is to keep doing the activity as well as you can and keep learning how to do it better the next time. This requires practicing the role even when you're not being paid or rewarded for doing so. Practice outside of practice even after people start praising you. There's no cap on greatness because it's an internal activity, not an external label.

It's true inside sports as kids and it's true inside organizations as adults.

REPRINTING THIS ARTICLE

If you would like to reprint this article in your in-house or industry publication, you are always welcome to do so.

About Dan Coughlin

Dan Coughlin works with leaders in business and healthcare to accelerate results in a sustainable way for their organizations by impacting teamwork, execution, innovation and branding. Visit his *Leadership Idea Center* at www.thecoughlincompany.com He is the author of the book, **The Business Leader's Impact: five critical drivers of sustainable profitable growth**. His clients include McDonald's, BJC HealthCare, Cisco, Anheuser-Busch InBev, Abbott, GE, Cardinal Health, Texas Bankers Association, Marriott, Shawnee Mission Medical Center, American Cancer Society, Coca-Cola, VHA, Shell, Toyota, RE/MAX, Boeing, Subway, St. Louis Cardinals, Jack in the Box, Prudential, and more than 200 other organizations.



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