

Wahoo Track 2010 Leadership Development



For the TEAM to be successful, each one of us must first take OWNERSHIP within the team and make a COMMITMENT to one another, accepting RESPONSIBILITY for their piece of the puzzle. You have a CHOICE. You can settle for mediocrity, never putting forth much effort or pushing yourself to your limits. Or you can COMMIT. If you commit, I WILL GUARANTEE that for every ounce of pain that you feel as you push yourself beyond what you thought was possible, you will experience equal or surpassing pleasure from your successes. In order to do this, we must have a set of guidelines or principles that will be our cornerstones for developing our team. Our guidelines will be "The Definite Dozen".

Wahoo Track "Definite Dozen"

The Definite Dozen is a set of principles that we will use in the Wahoo Track program to help transform each individual member into a complete "student-athlete" representing Wahoo Public Schools. Through the development and nurturing of these principles, a unified team, based on mutual respect and ownership will arise. We will focus on one principle each week and use these lessons to help develop and foster the set of values that we want our team to represent. We will constantly revisit these principles throughout the season to help us keep our focus. Remember: "Principles are anchors; without them you will drift!"

Principle 1: Respect Yourself and Others

There is no such thing as self-respect without respect for others. Individual success is a myth. We are all dependent on those around us. This is a fundamental truth you learn growing up. Respect is essential to building group cohesion. People who do not respect others will not make good team members and probably lack self-esteem themselves. You don't have to like everyone on your team but you do have to respect your coaches & teammates opinions and decisions, because your personal success depends on commitment to the overall plan and doing your part to make it work.

Our number one principle in our program is to **respect others**, no matter what their place on their team (or in society), because respect is the first step toward team building. Treat people the way you want to be treated!

Here are some simple ways to build mutual respect within our team:

Ways to Show Respect to Others (Coaches, Teammates, Teachers, Parents, Etc...)

- *Make good eye contact when communicating with others*

Eye contact is a sign of both self-respect and mutual respect. It demonstrates that you are both confident enough to look at the person speaking to you and that you will give them your full attention.

- *Be on time*

Lateness sends a message that you are either too sloppy, too careless, or too special to be on time. If your teammates and coaches always have to wait on you, resentment builds and egos will start to clash.

- *Don't just hear someone; Listen!*

Treat praise and criticism with the same level of attention because both will mold a person either positively or negatively.

- Thoughts: • *"You can't let praise or criticism get to you. It's a weakness to get caught up in either one."*

-John Wooden

- *"I must respect the opinions of others even if I disagree with them." ~ Herbert Henry Lehman*

Ambition can transform you. The starting point of ambition is self-respect. No matter how far behind the starting line, in life, you may be, or how many shortages or deficiencies there are in your life, you can overcome them with hard work and determination. Self-respect can be hard won. It's an ongoing process. But once you attain it, it will bear you up through almost anything, whether you are dealing with a difficult parent, teasing from others, self-doubt, or ordinary day-to-day situations. In critical situations, we all ask ourselves the same silent question: "Do I deserve to succeed?" Under pressure, uncertainty can creep into the subconscious to even the most outwardly confident person. If you haven't developed self-respect and mutual respect with those around you, the whisper is "Deep down you know you don't deserve it." So make sure the next time you ask yourself, "Do I deserve to succeed?", the answer is YES.

Ways to Show Respect for Yourself

- *Be True to Yourself*

If we are not true to ourselves, we cannot be true to others. To quote Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, "This above all: to thine self be true, and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man." You must know who you are and be true to who you are if you are going to be who you can and should become. You must have the courage to be true to yourself.

- *Make Each Day Your Masterpiece*

Too often, we get distracted by things outside of our control. You can't do anything about yesterday. You can do nothing about tomorrow. It has yet to come. However, tomorrow is largely determined by what you can do today. So make today a masterpiece. This rule is even more important in life than it is track. You have to apply yourself to the task of becoming a little better each and every day. It begins trying to make each day count and knowing that you can never make up for a lost day.

- Thoughts: • *"Don't think you can make up for a lack of effort today, by working twice as hard tomorrow. If you have it within your power to work twice as hard, why aren't you doing it today?" ~ John Wooden*
- *"Never believe that you're better than anyone else, but remember you're just as good as every one else" - Anonymous*

Principle 2: Take Full Responsibility

If you don't want the responsibility, don't sit in the big chair. That's the deal. To be successful, you must accept full responsibility for everything. There will be headaches, problems, and crises. You must accept responsibility even when it doesn't seem fair. And here's part two: The more successful you are, the more responsibility you must assume. Responsibility never ends. It's not just a step. You don't finish it and then move on to something more fun or interesting. Responsibility is a constant state of being.

Responsibility is a building block in both personal and team growth. When you sit in the big chair, you must make tough, unpopular decisions, because you are responsible for the group and the greater good. That is my job as the head coach. But that is also the responsibility of each team member individually. You must hold yourself and your teammates accountable for their actions. If you don't want to deal with problems, don't accept the job. As a leader, you must take responsibility for yourself and your teammates.

Another thing about responsibility, it evolves. We don't start out responsible, none of us do. It's something that must be taught, and it can be self-taught, too. How do you learn it? There's just one way. You learn responsibility by taking it on and forcing yourself to cope with it. You can't pick and choose the days that you feel like being responsible. It's not something that disappears when you are tired. In order to grow, you must accept new responsibilities, no matter how uncertain you may feel or how unprepared you are to deal with them. If comfort is what you are seeking, then don't aspire. Ambition is uncomfortable, by definition.

The best way to handle responsibility is to break it down into smaller parts. Take care of one small thing at a time. The smaller and more articulated a job is, the easier it is to fulfill. But the key is to make people accountable for their piece of the puzzle. The old saying of "Don't sweat the small stuff" does not apply to responsibility. You must sweat the small things and make yourself accountable for them, as well, because they are habit-forming.

As a head coach, two things must happen before I can demand responsible behavior from the team. First, I have to demonstrate that I fulfill my own responsibilities. Which means, I too, am accountable. Second, I must make sure that the responsibilities of our athletes and coaches are clearly defined and that everyone understands them. That way, if there is a breakdown, we know what happened.

Life is full of choices, with each choice bearing a consequence! If you make a positive choice, enjoy the rewards! If you make a negative choice, accept the consequences and do not make excuses. In becoming responsible, it is necessary to break any old bad habits that must be overcome. Whining, for example, is something I refer to as "the loser's limp". Blaming something or someone else for what's going wrong instead of being accountable for your own actions and part. The more responsibility you are given, the more committed you become to the group. When you have ownership in the team, you feel more accountable for the success or failure of the group, and will give more effort to ensure success. When it's OUR team, the team doesn't take second place to the individual.

Responsibility equals accountability equals ownership. A sense of ownership is the most powerful weapon in forming a strong team bond. Peer pressure, many times, can be a negative factor but when used in a positive manner, can be very effective in creating a sense of ownership within a group. Being accountable to one another, such as giving a 100% effort in workouts or completing weight training responsibilities, can be aided by the use of positive peer pressure. When you know you are accountable to others, you do not want to let them down.

One of the key pieces to accountability is dealing with mistakes or being wrong. If you don't admit a mistake and take responsibility for it, you are bound to make the same one again, often with greater consequences. Understanding that you can learn just as much from failure, as you can from your successes, is a cornerstone to growth. But you must be willing to take responsibility for failure and be willing to examine it closely no matter how excruciating or embarrassing.

Ask yourself everyday what your responsibilities are, and be accountable for them. When you have fulfilled those, ask for more.

Thoughts: • "Nobody can do it for you." ~ Ralph Cordiner

• "The willingness to accept responsibility for one's own life is the source from which self-respect springs." ~ Joan Didion

Principle 3: Make Hard Work Your Passion

The most valuable secret to being successful in track is this simple statement: "I am going to outwork you!" There is no great intangible quality for being successful. Talent only gets you so far and then you must find a way to separate yourself from the pack. It is simply a matter of putting your back into it and working hard. **The harder you work, the harder it is to surrender.** The work never ends. We never finish. We are constantly trying to get into better condition and to gain more knowledge, as coaches and athletes. There is a direct correlation between success and how hard a person, or persons are willing to work. **Unless you are willing to work hard, on a daily basis, you will underachieve.** Some people believe that they will be able to "turn it on" when the gun sounds, but the real achievers were those who formed solid work habits. One overachieving individual can be the catalyst for success for the group, pushing others to achieve at a higher level. But one lazy team member can sap the motivation and strength of the entire group. Talent is a gift and how you choose to use that gift will determine how successful you will become.

You can affect the mood of everyone else with your habits and attitude. "Morning people" do not exist. It's not a legitimate state of being or a physical complaint. It's just an excuse for dogging it. No person has the right to decide when they will give a full effort, especially when their colleagues have to take up the slack. **We will not have lazy people in our organization. You will either leave or be run off, literally.**

There is an unspoken understanding that develops between like-minded people who share a goal. The understanding is "Only you and I know how hard we are willing to work on each other's behalf." As the head coach, my job is to help individuals to push themselves to become the best student-athlete they can become, sometimes kicking and screaming, with the ultimate focus on helping them to achieve their goals. If you want to succeed, you need a plan.

Goal setting is one of the best ways to keep focused on achieving at the highest level possible. **Think big, focus small.** You have to focus small, because attention to everyday, ordinary detail is what will separate you from everyone else. In track, we will focus on the details that will help you accomplish your goals by breaking down each event into smaller segments. By focusing on these segments, the overall task does not seem as daunting.

Work is work. There is no way around it. There is no nice word for work. There is no pretty way to say it and no substitute for it. It is drudgery, grind, and toil. But you can make work more satisfying by first deciding to commit to it and decide to do it well. There is nothing fun about pushing your body to the limit in the 400m dash, collapsing in complete exhaustion at the finish, struggling to breathe. But the enjoyment comes from pushing yourself to the limit, going through the rigors to make the final push at the end of the race and outleaning your opponent at the tape knowing that you outworked them and the reward of victory is yours. When you combine passion with hard work and effort, the sky is the limit to what you can achieve.

- Thoughts:
- "There are no traffic jams along the extra mile." – Roger Staubach
 - "Time stays long enough for anyone who will use it." – Leonardo da Vinci
 - "A free lunch is only found in mousetraps." – John Capuzzi

Principle 4: Discipline Yourself So No One Else Has To

Discipline is more than just a set of consequences for a coordinating set of rules. Discipline is the internal structure that supports the team. It is the basis of leadership and fosters achievement and self-confidence. It is the one way to convince individuals to believe in themselves. It is the internal mechanism that self-motivates you. It gets you out of bed in the morning to get you to the weight room and it keeps you after practice to put in the extra time needed to reach your goals. It drives you. It is essential to success, whether individually or within a group. Recognition of consequences is the surest way to install discipline. When you think about doing something foolish, is there a consequence and does it give you a pause? My philosophy on discipline is that if you learn to think about the consequences, and more than that, actually see and feel the repercussions of your actions ahead of time, you might just prevent yourself from doing something stupid.

Nine-tenths of discipline is having the patience to do things right. It takes discipline to run an 800m race at the proper pace or making sure that you are giving a full effort when running through your approach in the long jump to ensure hitting the takeoff board. The purpose of discipline in any field is to produce a unified, consistent effort towards a common goal. That is why I do not view discipline in terms of punishment. Punishment is a form of temporary behavior control. Discipline is a much broader and more of a form of training, in which you drill repeatedly in the interest of improvement.

Self-discipline is a matter of how hard are you willing to work when NO ONE ELSE is watching. It is entirely up to you! You can make or break your own habits. No excuses. Self-disciplined individuals have a tremendous influence on those around them. It is all about attitude. **Attitude is a choice.** You have to force yourself to concentrate on the positives and block out the negatives. Visualization is a good aid. If you can picture yourself reaching a specific goal, you are more likely to actually be able to achieve it.

The most difficult part of self-discipline is convincing yourself that it's in your own best interest. Being disciplined doesn't always feel good. It does not lead to the path of instant gratification. The reward is much further down the road but it is a much deeper form of gratification. The real reward is self-respect and long-term success. Life lacks structure so you must provide it for yourself in the form of self-discipline.

- Thoughts:
- "Talent without discipline is like an octopus on roller skates. There's plenty of movement, but you never know if it's going to be forward, backwards, or sideways." - H. Jackson Brown, Jr.
 - "We are what we repeatedly do, excellence then is not an act, but a habit." - Aristotle

Principle 5: Put the Team Before Yourself

Teamwork does not come naturally. We are born with certain inclinations, but sharing isn't one of them. Teamwork has to be taught. You don't jump lump a group of people together in a room and call them a team and expect them to behave like one. No organization will survive without teamwork but how do you convince a group of talented, individual performers to set aside their personal feelings, ambitions, and personal agendas in favor of a unified effort? Without incentives, people really don't work together consistently. Teamwork is not a matter of persuading yourself and your teammates to set aside personal ambitions for the greater good. It's a matter of recognizing that your personal ambitions and the ambitions of the team are one and the same. That's the incentive!

Teamwork is really a form of trust. It happens when you surrender the mistaken idea that you can go it alone, and realize that you won't achieve your individual goals with the support of your teammates. Once you buy into it, you will feel a sense of relief. Even so, teamwork is a highly tenuous state. Like a garden, it must be tended to and cultivated every day, because it doesn't take much to disrupt it. A single unhappy troublemaker, a murmured complaint can undo it. When you are dealing with highly charged, competitive individuals, egos invariably clash. It is the challenge to try and find balance within all of the chaos to maintain the framework of a team.

Teamwork is what makes common people capable of uncommon results. Analogies are useful in teaching the team concept. People will buy into it a lot more readily if you can show them what you mean and not just talk about it. Let's say I give each member of the track team a pencil and ask them to break their pencil in half. You will hear snapping of pencil throughout the group. Now, what if I take the same amount of pencils and bind them together with rubber bands. Now try to break them. You can't. That is the basic principle of teamwork!

Now, not everyone is a born leader. Role players are every bit as essential to the success of a group as the leader. What you need is a good mix of personalities. Some are leaders, some are role players, some are contributors. Everyone has different abilities and brings something different to the table. Role playing is uncomfortable, especially for people that are competitive and diverse. You may fight the team concept because it means yielding something that you are instinctively opposed to doing. But you can train yourself to become a team player, by keeping a disciplined eye on the larger goal and realizing that when you help each other, you help yourself.

There is a deeper meaning and an ethic to team building that can't be taught with a tricky mental exercise or a cute analogy. If teamwork is about trust, then honesty is vital. Before you can work together, you have to be honest with one another. You don't trick somebody into doing something they don't want to do. There is no easy way to slide through a conversation when you have to ask someone to step aside to let another teammate take their place. When you talk about unselfishness, you have to be candid, or you will invite discord. If you deceive someone, if you insinuate that they will receive more personal gain or satisfaction than they can realistically gain, they will be susceptible to feeling that the team aim was counter to their individual success. They will think "I set aside my own interests in favor of the team's and I didn't get what I was promised. I was cheated." It is important to let people know upfront what your philosophy is and you have to be clear about their expectations. People will perform so much better if they understand their specific role and what is expected of them. You have to stress from the onset that no one individual is more important than the other, whether you are the number one runner at your distance, or the first sub on a relay. It's the only way to preempt jealousy.

To me, teamwork is a lot like being part of a family. It comes with obligations, entanglements, headaches, and quarrels. But the rewards are worth the cost. When I talk about team building, I don't mean that everyone has to agree or be exactly alike. The aim is to build a team, not clone one another. You have to value people for their different qualities and abilities. Teamwork is not created by like-mindedness. It's an emotional cohesion that develops from mutual respect and reciprocity and from coping with good times and adversity. As in a family, you have to be generous enough to take pleasure in someone else's success, not just your own. And have the intelligence to realize that no one succeeds alone.

To me, the greatest reward for being a team player, far outweighing any personal gain, is that means you will never be alone. When you are pressured, teammates will lessen the burden. When you are successful, teammates will only multiply it. **The amount of success you are capable of enjoying, and the pleasure you are capable of feeling, is equal to the number of people you are willing to share it with.**

Thoughts: "Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."

-Henry Ford

•"No one can whistle a symphony. It takes an orchestra to play it." -H.E. Luccock

•"We must all hang together, or assuredly, we shall all hang separately." -Benjamin Franklin

Principle 6: Make Winning An Attitude

I am a believer, by nature. Belief is a fairly practical matter, that in its strongest form, is grounded in reality. It is largely a result of focus and hard work. To be successful, belief must be at the core of your team. You must believe in one another and in the principles you are being taught. **Once you begin to believe in yourself and your teammates, the most ordinary team is capable of extraordinary things.** It is simply a matter of attitude. Attitude lies somewhere between emotion and logic. It's a curious mix of optimism and determination that enables you to maintain a positive outlook and continue plodding in the face of the most adverse circumstances. But while attitude is a state of mind, it is also based on a few hard certainties. There is nothing mysterious or illogical in the certainty that you are willing to work harder and longer than your opponent, even when you are behind. That small piece of self-knowledge gives you something to hang onto. It's how comebacks are born. **"Fate saves a warrior when his courage endures"** What it means is, if you keep fighting, blindly, in a positive and courageous way, sometimes chance will rescue you.

Winning is an attitude. No one ever got anywhere, accomplished anything, or survived any amount of adversity, by being negative. With attitude, you can determine your own performance. But more than that, you can help determine the performance of others. A single individual with a strong positive attitude can lift those around them. Sometimes a positive person can enter a room and immediately the air feels different. It's as though their presence literally converts any negative ions into positive ones.

Attitude is a choice. What you think you can do, whether positive or negative, confident or scared, will most likely happen. When you doubt, you create negative. It will affect your performance, and probably drag others down too. How many times have you watched someone fail, because they were full of self-doubt? To be successful, you have to make winning part of your attitude. To think positively about a situation and cast all doubts aside.

In any situation, you have to deal with the unpredictable. You can't determine the weather, luck, or other people's opinions. But when things don't go as planned, there is one thing you can count on: your outlook and attitude. That's when an attitude can provide that knife-edge of difference between winning and losing.

There are some concrete ways to create a winning attitude. When you prepare to win, belief comes easily. We must simulate and prepare to win each and every day. I believe you get what you deserve. Those who prepare to win, more times than not, win.

Sometimes you have to "rise up" and perform a task that is out of character for that person. It's not something that the person might do on a daily basis but it's a fact that all of us have to take on jobs that we didn't plan on doing. How do people perform out of character, or above and beyond their capabilities? We will call it "dialing up". Dialing up is the state an athlete reaches when they play a level above their norm, or when a person does something out of their comfort zone, without hesitation. Articulating what is at stake is a good way to force people to believe in themselves. There is nothing wrong with stating the rewards and consequences of a situation when you're trying to dial up a performance. Every person has the ability to adjust his or her attitude and dial up for a big occasion. If an athlete makes a mistake, they often carry that mistake around with them. Instead of focusing on the mistake, athletes need to "reset" their minds to winning again, often in

a short time frame. By focusing on “I can” statements, athletes can push themselves through the self-doubt and back into a winning frame of mind. As a coach, I will sometimes have to “target” an athlete in practice or in a meet, to show the group that if one person can handle the pressure, than all of them can. “Handling it” is what we are after from the whole team. When our team members see that one athlete that is challenged can rise up past their fears and doubts, and maintain a good attitude, the think, “If they can do it, I can do it too!” Sometimes feelings can be hurt when a person is challenged but, as coaches, we must care enough about our athletes to push them past their comfort levels to help them succeed. The reason that targeting works is because an athlete that can endure the challenge and face the adversity, head on, with a positive attitude, literally empowers themselves and all those around them. They can uplift their teammates to perform at a level that they only dreamed of reaching individually because the power of the team allows them to know that they are not alone in their challenge.

To be successful, you have to take risks. **You can’t steal second with your foot on first.** I firmly believe in taking chances and I believe in calculated gambles. A large part of dialing up is getting athletes to take chances and be willing to go beyond their limits, to go beyond anything they have ever done in the past. That is why you must work on your mental strength, as well as your physical. You must force yourself to expand on your physical talent and on your view of what you are capable of. To persuade someone to take a risk, you sometimes have to throw a little emotion into the mix to get him or her geared up. But the opposite is true for someone who is too emotional to begin with. For those individuals, you must get them to control their emotions until they are needed to be unleashed. All leaders must have a blending of emotion and logic, because their attitude will infuse the whole team. Our athletes need to develop a mental toughness and businesslike in their approach, not carrying their emotions on their sleeve. We don’t want robots but we don’t want anyone flying all over the place either. An example would be challenging an athlete to run 6 400m dashes at 85% pace with little rest between. My job is to motivate the athlete, individually, to perform at their peak performance. Why? I am trying to develop an attitude. An attitude that no matter what challenge is set in front of them, that they will be willing to push themselves to great heights because they are not alone in their challenge. Targeting works because it gives our team a small piece of belief to hang onto. Often, belief is made up of the specific knowledge that you’ve endured it before, and you can do it again. A small piece of knowledge, like faith in your teammates and coaches, can be the catalyst for the greatest success. These things add up to the certainty of knowing that together we can accomplish anything we put our minds to.

Belief in yourself is what happens when you know you’ve done the things that entitle you to success. Real confidence is grounded on everything you have practiced all year long. It is based on your experience and the work you have done along the way. **Belief does not ensure winning, but having belief and a positive attitude gives you a fighting chance every time.** And if you do lose, attitude cushions the fall. At least you have the knowledge that you gave yourself the chance to succeed.

- Thoughts:
- “In faith there is enough light for those who want to believe and enough shadows to blind those who don’t.” - Blaise Pascal
 - “The number one problem that keeps people from winning in the United States today is lack of belief in themselves.” ~ Arthur L. Williams

Principle 7: Be A Competitor

Competitiveness is not always compatible with good manners. It is not the most sociable quality you can possess. But competitiveness is what separates the achievers from the average. You have more within you than you realize. Competition is one of the greatest tools for exploring yourself, and surprising yourself. Too many people elect to be average, out of timidity. The reason why so many people underachieve is because they are afraid to make a mistake or fail. Competitiveness is the opposite of complacency. It is uncomfortable and requires commitment, risk, and soul-searching. If you choose to compete, you must take a huge gamble. You might just lose and realize that that is the best you can do. But you will never reach your full potential unless you take that risk.

It’s not only important to compete, it’s also important to compete against the best. You have to set high goals in order to achieve. People will rise to the level of their own expectations and of the level of the competition they seek. As a coach, I must ask athletes to give more of themselves than they think is possible. I want them to learn how to dig deeper. By doing things when you are too tired, by pushing yourself farther than you thought you could, you become a competitor. Each time you go beyond your perceived limit, you become mentally stronger. You begin to think, “I’m a little tougher than I thought. Maybe I can go ever further.”

A competitor continually sets new goals. They feel the need to keep raising the bar. If they meet their first goal, they immediately refocus to make the next goal higher, to challenge themselves more. You can’t always be the strongest or most talented person on the track, but you can be the most competitive. There are bound to be days when you run into someone who is better than you. What can you do about it? You can compete. You can put forth so much effort that you cut your own opponent down to size and force them to work below their abilities. Competitiveness allows you to influence your opponent. There is always someone better than you. Whatever you do in life, chances are, you will run into a situation in which you are not as talented as the person next to you. That is when being a competitor can make a difference in your fortunes. If you know that your opponent likes to wait until the final 100m of an 800m race to “kick it in”, push the pace early in the race and take away their strength by forcing them to use all of their energy to keep up the pace that YOU have set. That is being a competitor.

When you are a competitor, you will develop adversaries, people who push you to reach inside and give a greater effort. You have to love your adversaries. They make you better. They force you to improve, to stretch your capabilities. Competitors respond to a challenge from their opponents, and to negative motivation, as well as positive. Competitors seek revenge for losses. They are constantly asking, “Did I do enough? Was I good enough?” Competitors want to prove other wrong. If you want to be the best, you must compete against the best, even if it means risking a loss. Having worthy adversaries stimulates your work ethic, and brings out qualities you may not have known you had.

Competitors are essentially selfish. You may feel that being competitive conflicts with being a good, compassionate person. But ask yourself, “What are competitive skills good for?” They are there to help us battle adversity, to help us endure tough situations, to help us get up when we have been knocked down, and to help us prevail over that blows that life deals us.

There is a time and a place to be a competitor. Competitiveness is not meant for peacetime. But it’s an invaluable quality in coping with misfortune. Channeled correctly, you can use it to battle all types of hardships in your life. **When you choose to be a competitor, you choose to be a survivor.** When you choose to compete, you make a conscious decision to find out what your real limits are, not just what you think they are. Competition trains you to accept risk and to endure setbacks. By embracing it, you can enhance your life. But it will also pull you through those painful, frightening everyday battles we all have to face at one time or another.

- Thoughts:
- “A competitor will find a way to win. Competitors take bad breaks and use them to drive themselves that much harder. Quitters take bad breaks and use them as reasons to give up. It’s all a matter of pride.” - Nancy Lopez
 - “You can’t just beat a team, you have to leave a lasting impression in their minds so they never want to see you again” – Mia Hamm
 - “A competitive world offers two possibilities. You can lose. Or, if you want to win, you can change.”

Principle 8: Handle Success Like You Handle Failure

You cannot have continued success without experiencing failure. There are many different forms of success but they have one thing in common. They are open-ended. They aren’t tasks that you finish. Success is a project that’s always under construction. It’s much harder to handle success than it is to handle failure. You have to learn to handle them alike. Only by placing success and failure in their proper perspectives can you maintain the principles and priorities you arrived with. When you fail, you have a natural tendency to examine it more closely. You analyze it. You critique it. You look at every second of your performance. You can learn a lot from losing. If you win, you are not nearly as concerned with your mistakes. Most of us overact when we lose, and over celebrate when we win. A good rule of thumb is the 24-hour rule. You have 24 hours to enjoy a win or recover from a loss. This way you can use that time to reflect but still stay focused on the present tasks at hand.

Success can lull you. It makes the most ambitious of us complacent and sloppy. In a way, you have to cultivate a kind of amnesia and forget all of your previous prosperity. Failure is hard to swallow, but much easier to remedy. Failure is simple. It gives you a distinct blueprint of where you’ve gone wrong. Success is a much trickier matter. It’s like balancing on the top of a pole. It’s one thing to climb up the pole, but quite another to stay up there. Somehow you have to make a commitment to get better every day, no matter how successful you were the day before. We want today to be so intense that you have no time to look back. One way to help to ensure success is to make practice harder than the meets, so that all athletes can experience success and failure, under pressure, prior to a meet.

Losing makes you wiser. There is nothing to be ashamed of in short-term failure, or in making a mistake, so long as you deal positively with it. The reason that success is so hard to duplicate is because we tend to stop doing the disciplined things that made us successful in the first place. We lose our focus, and success is not that overcomplicated, it is all about focus. You can’t perform well when you think, “I HAVE to do this!” You must handle pressure well enough to be in a loose, comfortable state.

Continued success is about load leveling. Load leveling is used when you have too many people on one side of a boat. They keep your boat level when you go through rough water and keep those aboard in balance. It’s about putting together all of the principles learned: respect, responsibility, loyalty, and discipline. They are building blocks to form a solid foundation. With that you can build success after success, because real success is developing a solid, value system.

- Thoughts:
- “There are no gains without pains.” -Benjamin Franklin
 - “Yesterday I dared to struggle. Today I dare to win.” - Bernadette Devlin
 - “If you think you can, you can. And if you think you can’t, you’re right.” -Henry Ford

Principle 9: Develop and Demonstrate Loyalty

Loyalty is not a prescriptive for success. It is a value, something that is, one hopes, personified. I seriously doubt it is something that can be “taught”. But it can be developed, and earned. I sincerely believe that the “family” model is the most conducive to success. In the family model, you can count on each other. In pressure situations, you don’t wonder how the person next to you will react. You know. The single most common reason organizations self-destruct is disloyalty, especially when they are made of young people who have a tendency to talk behind each other’s backs. To build a sound organization, you must surround yourself with people who are constant and who will be true to your group. Creating a family atmosphere is, as far as I’m concerned, the surest way to do that.

How do you keep your family together? You take care of your family. If you want to develop loyalty, you must first demonstrate it. You win with people. In a family model organization, you have to allow for differences and entertain the opinion of others, without accusing them of disloyalty. The absolute heart of loyalty is to value the people who tell you the truth, not just the people who tell you what you want to hear.

Loyalty is not something you can demand or enforce. You can’t make someone loyal to you. You are loyal to individuals that you have come to trust and understand over time. You have usually endured some adversity with them and come out of it better for the time spent. Loyalty is not a bargain, or an exchange. It’s something that must be tended to on a daily basis, and it will be tried and tested on occasion. In any family, jealousies arise. Relationships get stale. Not everyone to whom you feel loyal to is automatically loyal back. It’s not an “I’ll do this for you, if you do this for me” deal. Loyalty is a selfless proposition. You won’t ever have it unless you are willing to give it away first.

Thought: • "The greater the loyalty of a group toward the group, the greater is the motivation among the members to achieve the goals of the group, and the greater the probability that the group will achieve its goals." --Rensis Likert

Principle 10: Don't Just Work Hard, Work Smart

What does it mean to work smart? It is the combination of efficiency and effectiveness that will help you succeed without wasted motion, and with perspective. Working smart is a matter of sizing up the task at hand and deciding on the best way of doing it. **You can't push a piece of string. But you can pull it.** One of the keys to working smart also knows when to peak. Peaking is a matter of timely work. It's a matter of knowing when to sweat and when to rest. Pushing you to the limits early in the season and early in a meet week and then tapering off to allow the body to recover and ready itself for peak performance.

Thought: • "When your work speaks for itself, don't interrupt." - Henry J. Kaiser

Principle 11: Change is A Must

We all resist change. Change is the opposite of security and familiarity. Even when you know you need to change, even when you want to change, it's hard to do. Why? Because it forces you out of your comfort zone. Change is good. How can you grow if you never change? Breaking out of cycles or old habits is hard work, and frightening. We resist it out of laziness, or fear, or insecurity. We're afraid it won't work or what others might say. The willingness to experiment with change is the most essential ingredient to success at anything.

Change is risky, but not nearly as risky as standing still or being overcautious. There is no worse feeling than second guessing yourself after the fact, knowing you could have done something more if you would have only taken a chance. When you make a change, it forces your opponent to hesitate. They have to adjust, and in that small time interval, you can seize the advantage. Success in any field is about who is best able to change in fluidity. The better the competition, the open you should be to change.

When you change, it's the same as admitting, "I can do this better." For that reason, even though change can be viewed as a sign of weakness, it's the ultimate strength. The most successful organizations are the ones who are always looking for the new idea or the new way of doing something, trying to find a better way. The willingness to change allows you to manage your weaknesses more effectively and reinforce your strengths. Think about the reasons why we resist change. We're afraid. We're lazy. We're cautious. Change can make you feel out of control. But, in fact, if you learn to be comfortable with it, the opposite will be true. You will find yourself in charge of every situation.

Changing your rhythm gives you the ultimate in control. If you can dictate, even briefly, how a situation is played out you have the advantage. Genuine, fundamental change takes determination. It doesn't happen overnight. You have to constantly break old habits and instill new ones. Change is a force of nature. The truth is that nothing, good or bad, lasts forever. There will be setbacks, injuries, and adverse circumstances, and the person who deals with them best will win out.

Thoughts • "No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man."

~ Heraclites

• "Those who are victorious plan effectively and change decisively. They are like a great river that maintains its course but adjusts its flow." ~ Sun Tzu

• "If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude. Don't complain."

- Maya Angelou

Principle 12: Whatever It Takes

Three short but simple words that often spell out the difference between achievement and mediocrity. The best in any field are renowned for doing whatever it takes — and then doing more. And not only do these successful folks consistently do whatever it takes; they persistently do it to the best of their God-given abilities as well.

They fervently believe that a job half done or a task half completed is exactly that — only partially finished. In order to reap the benefits of a job well done, they believe it must be done and done well. And that means finishing what they start.

Doing whatever it takes — and doing a little more whenever it is needed — has long been the hallmark of champions around the world. These winners always do a little more than is expected.

These top achieving go-getters always push themselves a little farther, especially in those moments when they are mentally and physically spent. Leaving a task unfinished is just not in the cards. After all, if it's worth doing, it is certainly worth completing.

Sometimes the only distinction between getting the job done and falling short lies in the tenacity and mental toughness of the individual making the effort. Starting something is one thing; seeing it through to completion is another matter entirely.

After all, you will very seldom chase a worthwhile goal without "hitting the wall" at some point, where giving up or packing it in is ever so tempting. You feel exhausted and the remaining part of the path seems straight up hill. Doubts creep in and giving up looks a whole lot easier than going forward.

It is during these very moments, when you and you alone make the call to finish or fold, that shape your life and destiny on earth. By going the distance and seeing your task through to completion, you can reach out and embrace excellence as a way of life.

We all have a winning spirit burning brightly down in our hearts and souls. And it is this shining beacon of hope that can take us anywhere we desire. Its radiant energy can light up our lives and bring our fondest dreams and aspirations to life, if only allowed to do so. Make no mistake about it, you too can quickly light up your life by becoming a finisher, always doing whatever it takes to get where you wish to go.

As Napoleon Hill once said, “The battle is all over except the 'shouting' when one knows what is wanted and has made up his mind to get it, whatever the price may be.” When you know what you want and want it so badly that you are willing to scale the highest mountain or swim the deepest ocean to get there, your success in life is an absolute cinch.

As long as you are willing to continue the climb everyday, seeing each and every endeavor through to completion, you will ultimately deliver on your immense promise and potential. And a lot sooner than you think.

The Bottom Line: ***You can get whatever you desire when you are willing to do whatever it takes.***

- Thoughts:
- “Whatever you are, be a good one.” - Abraham Lincoln
 - “Whoever I am, or whatever I am doing, some kind of excellence is within my reach.”
- John W. Gardner
 - “Whatever your life's work is, do it well. A man should do his job so well that the living, the dead, and the unborn could do no better.” - Martin Luther King Jr.

**The Definite Dozen is a philosophy that originated from Pat Summitt, the women's head coach at Tennessee.*