



LEADERSHIP 101

The values and habits of our daily behavior will reveal who and what we are to our team members. If we are what we repeatedly do, then excellence should not be an act, but a habit (Aristotle). Excellence is not achieved by a great feat, but rather an accumulation of very small perfected details along the road of success. A major difference between an effective leader and simply a coach is the perfection of details.

Absolute perfection may never be attainable, but striving for it is. If our day to day behaviors and actions match up with our words, what we display to our staff will spread like wildfire and good things will happen.

Minor details-like pennies-add up. A good banker isn't careless with pennies; a good leader isn't sloppy about details (John Wooden). Instead of worrying about the final goal, concentrate on the small puzzle pieces needed to build your masterpiece. After all, little things make BIG THINGS happen.

If what you have done yesterday still looks big to you, you haven't done much today. –Coach Mike Krzyzewski

Under the Bar with...

John Sisk

Director of Speed, Strength & Conditioning

Vanderbilt University



- 1) **As one of the country's top strength and conditioning coaches, how did you get your start? How important was relationship building when you pursued this profession?**

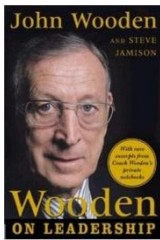
Got my start in coaching at Tuscola High School (Waynesville) NC. Doug Brooks my high school coach called me and offered me a chance to coach football and take over the strength program in 1991. Coach Joey Batson (Clemson University) gave me my first opportunity (1993) at Furman University to be a strength coach. I owe Coach Batson so much for taking a chance on me.

I think *relationship building is essential in strength training*. When I was at the high school level I was the recruiting liaison to the college coaches. I asked questions of every coach that walked in our field house about their strength coach, program, and their philosophy on strength etc. Same way at the college level with NFL scouts. I speak to every scout that comes in the doors at Vanderbilt.

I encourage every young strength coach to understand that *all the sport coaches you work with will help further your career*. It is amazing to look back and see some of the coaches that I worked for and with that are at the pinnacle in coaching at the college and professional level. It is those same relationships you build early in your career that help you get that dream job!

- 2) **Many of us associate Vanderbilt Speed, Strength and Conditioning with kettle bell training. How have kettle bells transformed your program as far as athletic performance and injury prevention? Can coaches get away with dumbbells for some of the same benefits? Is there a specific kettle bell brand you recommend for college strength and conditioning?**

I have implemented kettle bells into our program but by no means are we the pioneers of kettle bell training. Coach Ethan Reeves (Wake Forest) has had them in his programs for years. In our program we use many tools throughout the year with our athletes and the kettle bells have become a staple of some of our training efforts. I have seen many benefits with our athletes since we incorporated the kettle bells. Flexibility with many of our athletes particularly the hamstrings and hip mobility. Also, we utilize them during the in-season with football and been able to have seen *increases in our cleans* starting the off-season and into our testing. As far as utilizing dumbbells instead of kettle bells, you can replicate the movements to a degree but when possible purchase kettle bells when your budget allows. The one's I like the best are the **RKC bells form Dragon Door**.



BOOK OF THE MONTH

Wooden on Leadership
By John Wooden

While many coaches have playbooks and portfolios ready to explain why they do things a certain way, leaders have a handbook prepared to handle team management on all fronts. John Wooden, former head coach of 10 national NCAA basketball championships at UCLA, reveals his 12 lesson of leadership, pyramid of success and genuine qualities essential for building and managing a winning team.

Many of us have heard certain “isms” from our own coaches that just seemed to stick as we grew wiser over the years. Chances are many of those famous quotes and sayings were from Coach Wooden. His wisdom paved the way for teams, players and coaches alike to create an environment and attitude that would bring out the very best in each and every one of us.

3) Do you think the type of athlete that comes into a private university differs from other places you have been? What separates Vanderbilt from other schools in the SEC?

A big difference I have noticed with the athletes here is that they are very driven. They learn how to train and stay focused on the tasks and goals we set for them. Also, especially in football we have signed some athletes a little under the recruiting radar with a tremendous amount of upside for development. Some of which have become first round draft picks in many of our sports. In some instances the 4 and 5 star players are what they are when they arrive on campus and sometimes don't understand their career is just starting and have to train to be successful or they have never been pushed to excel. *The things that separates Vanderbilt from other schools is you have to compete everyday in the classroom, strength training and on the field. So if you're scared to compete, don't come to Vanderbilt.*

4) What are three “uncommon” texts or videos you would recommend every sports performance specialist to check out and why?

Most texts I try to read are on leadership. I am always trying to find ways to develop leaders in our program. So I have all the John Maxwell books and work books.

- *The Difference Maker* by: John Maxwell ... A good book about Attitude!
- *Warfighting* by: US Marine Corps... Overall philosophy of war and decision making and strategies of war.
- *To Be The Man “Ric Flair”* by: Mark Madden ... Just because I like Ric Flair!

5) Any tips or guidelines you would tell a young adult just breaking into the sports performance field?

Be humble!! **Loyalty**often said, seldom practiced! *Understand when your given an opportunity to work with someone's child that you have a chance to make a difference in their life whether it's the superstar or one of the walk-on's that will do anything to be a part of the program!* Just a few tips that I look at when looking for new young coaches... I want to see that they have worked. I look at coaches that know how to work and are willing to roll their sleeves up to help others succeed.

Resumes: Don't send out mass resume emails asking to be a part of some ones staff and have addresses to every strength coach in America on the send list. I will delete it immediately. *I usually hire the people who come by and meet me and my staff and watch what we do.* It helps me and my staff put a name with a face. It shows you have a real interest in a program.

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NEW RESOURCE FOR COACHES



SMARTER Team Training

SMARTER Team Training has been developed to focus on athlete and team development, performance, and education. By incorporating the SMARTER Team Training programs into your year round athletic development program, you will decrease your injury potential, increase individual athleticism, and maximize your team training time. Check out Coach Taylor's group online!

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- STT's official blog
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Make it More than 3 sets of Bench

As my staff and I have read the articles in previous YSCCa newsletters and discussed the many different topics that develop from our weekly meetings, we've agreed that we are all in this profession for the athletes. I agree that you have to have your heart in this profession 100% or you will not be a great coach. The athletes can tell when someone is not giving 100%, whether it is their teammates, coaches, or anyone around the program.

Often times my interns and I try to collaborate on creative ways to get them compensation while they are "paying their dues." I understand and appreciate that you can't be in this business for the money because many of us are underpaid and accept that upon taking on the job of a collegiate strength and conditioning coach. That being said, we still have bills to pay.

I talk with my staff each day about how to think beyond their "3 sets of 10 on the bench" experience that most of them thought they were going to get when they first contacted me about an internship or volunteering. There are many ways to "pay your dues" and create income or at least a pathway to earning money in the future. *After we teach them about philosophy, program design, injury prevention, performance flexibility, etc, etc., what do they really have? They still have limited to no way of paying their bills upon completion of the internship. The stress of making ends meet can then limit how involved the interns/volunteers want to be or financial are capable of being.*

My challenge to you is to **think outside the box**. This challenge goes out to potential interns/volunteers and the supervisors. How can we help these young professionals in our field make an impact? Be more recognizable? And eventually earn more money? It can only add credibility to what we do. By helping to expose the interns to entrepreneurial ideas we are pushing the industry forward. Most would even say "outside our comfort zone."

To potential interns/volunteers: **Do not put the cart in front of the horse.** *Do not walk in and think that anyone is going to give their program design, training philosophy, nor a business structure or money making ideas away for free.* You must be willing to roll your sleeves up and get in the trenches. Be motivated, inspiring, lead by example, read, research, and get involved in anything and everything you possibly can. Remember that your intern experience is a time for professional development. Sit down with your supervisor; ask

Rob Taylor
Head Strength and Conditioning Coach
Loyola University



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TIP OF THE MONTH

Speak Coach

After finally catching up on my podcasts, I came across a great tip by Coach Mike Boyle, of MBSC. Many of us have our own personal experiences with college athletics which help us relate to our athletes. If we learn to speak coach (the language between specific sport qualities and training) with our coaches, the relationship between strength and conditioning coaches and sport coaches will be improved.

No one should ever be titled as a “single-sport” coach. Speaking “coach” proves to every sport coach that you truly understand their sport and want to help them achieve their goals. We may all know that we need double/single leg pushes, horizontal/vertical pulls and explosive movements. How can we speak this to our sport coaches so they understand? Does your soccer coach really know why you test horizontal power? Does your tennis coach understand why you perform glute-ham raises and single leg squats? Learn to speak THEIR language.

detailed questions that require thoughtful answers. Bring other information about other programs to staff meetings to discuss thoughts on multiple aspects of this profession. Go watch practices, games, and film sessions. Volunteer to supervise study hall, or help the training room clean up and take the towels to the equipment room, etc. Learn all of the aspects that make this profession so great. Step up and take on the not-so-glamorous duties too. Listen to what the athletes are saying. *Figure out how you will make it better when it is your program some day.* And do not be scared or intimidated to share those thoughts with your supervisor. They may have even had the same thoughts, tried the same approach, and can provide you with some feedback to make your ideas even more effective.

To the supervisors of our up and coming professionals: I, like many of you who got into this business by sleeping on couches or in the office during our internships/volunteer experiences, sometimes think that because we did it, those after us should too. Times have changed and the kids will not respond well to the thought of having to “grind it out” because of financial strain. They can’t ask mom and dad to get them through because it is a “can’t miss” opportunity. Mom and dad may not be making ends meet for themselves and wonder what this added monetary burden will do in the long run since there is no guaranteed employment upon completing an internship. I don’t want to have my interns working the bar scene at night, running into athletes, and then having to explain things at the 6 am workouts.

Let’s help these young strength and conditioning coaches by exposing them to a business plan while they are helping us with our brand new, never seen before “4 sets of bench” program.

#1 - Help the interns set up a blog to discuss their experience. Two posts a week doesn’t take much time and it will help spread the word about their internship experience.

#2 – Ask your interns to post at least one video on YouTube a week. Use this resource to help teach the interns about editing film and communicating effectively. The feedback they get can help them grow as a professional.

#3 – Find out if your interns know how to develop a Fan Page, discussion group, or other means of professional interaction on any of the vast number of social networking sites.

#4 – Ask your sports coaches if the interns can develop a 30 minute speed camp/clinic before pre-game to help put fans in the seats and to help put a couple bucks in the pockets of the interns working with their programs.

#5 – Support your interns by getting them involved in camps, conferences, and clinics. I know, I know, they may not be able to lead a group as of this moment or are ready to present. But why can’t they earn their stripes by helping with registration? Being the one who

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YSCCa

CONTINUING ADVANCEMENT FOR THE PREMIER COACHES OF TODAY

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YSCCa ANNOUNCEMENTS

I want to thank all of the coaches who provided much needed feedback for the poll question posted on Facebook last month regarding the relationship between the NSCA and CSCCa. After speaking with some of you on the phone and answering emails, we have decided that the YSCCa will stand as an organization. We will continue to provide an online outlet for coaches to communicate and develop. We will also be adding a group to Strength Performance Network very soon. Keep your eyes on the website and any updates throughout the month.

Also, be sure to check out the other attachments for clinics around the nation. If you have a clinic or any other professional development that you need passed around, please send it over. We would more than happy to help you out.



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goes through the workouts, drills, exercises during the hands-on demonstrations? Showing that as a liaison of your internship program they have gained a wealth of knowledge beyond what ten sets of bench press could have taught them.

We all have challenges that we face each day. We work a ton of hours. We work with a ton of coaches, athletes, trainers, administrators, alumni, boosters, etc., etc. each day. We need to think outside the box to find ways to help our interns make some cash to help them grow as young professionals. **You never know, you may have to call one of your interns one day for a job!** This crazy business that we immerse ourselves into 12+ hours a day, 6+ days a week can be gone in one coaching change or a need for a “fresh approach.”

My advice to people who are in the field is “Go for it!” We motivate athletes every day to do things they thought were out of their reach. **Lead by example and step outside your own comfort zone.** If you've thought about writing a book, GO FOR IT! If you've thought about doing a DVD, GO FOR IT! If you've wanted to do a clinic, GO FOR IT! If you've wanted to set up a business just in case, GO FOR IT! Teach along the way. *Always remember to allow those who want to help the opportunity to get involved and learn from someone they respect and look up to. We can always find time to give back to a profession that has given us so much.*

Good luck in all of your endeavors in 2010! I wish everyone great happiness and success.

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