

2013 North American Society for Sport Management Conference (NASSM 2013)

Building Successful Leaders in the Sport Management Classroom and in the Sport Management Field

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Teaching

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**60-minute symposium,
roundtable, or workshop
(Room 410)**

Abstract 2013-053

2:10 PM

Effective leadership is a central tenant for classrooms, organizations, scholars and practitioners (Kozlowki & Ilgen, 2006). Group projects are a widely accepted pedagogy technique utilized in a variety of academic disciplines, including sport management and coaching education. Often students in these programs come from a competitive sports background where the assumption is that a member of a team is somehow an accomplished leader. Few academic programs deal with developing leaders and engaging in effective teamwork. Yet, we, as professors of Sport Management, often require group work in the classroom. Job descriptions list "leadership skills" as a requirement. As professors of this applied field of sport management, educators are best serving students, future employees and potential employers by developing skills by which students can translate this theory to practice. Effective groups have many common traits; traits that can be identified and enhanced. For example, high performance teams are rarely self-selected. When left to self-select, participants often choose groups by shared traits such as gender, interests, or expertise (Stibbard, 2000). High functioning teams are heterogeneous (Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 1991) which brings a variety of strengths to the group. Additionally, teams have clearly defined roles with continued situation monitoring and accountability (Lencioni, 2002). Avoiding accountability leads to conflict. Therefore it is important to develop accountability, yet most teams are unaware how to do this effectively.

Finally mutually supporting team members and trust are strengths that can be cultivated. The corporate model has historically mirrored Western Culture of individualism, a model counter intuitive to team building. However, with highly effective teams and leaders it is no longer about the individual getting ahead but the team benefiting the organization (Dungy, 2010), which is a new direction for the corporate culture. Trust, is needed to build the relationships that make teams effective. Again, this does not just happen, but can be developed over time with appropriate training (Parker, 2008).

Once effective teams are formed, the difference in the success of the team is leadership. Individuals have the potential to be leaders, but a leader is not a leader in every situation. The key is to not just develop leaders, but to have leaders understand their strengths and weaknesses as leaders (Maxwell, 2003)

However, leadership and team building skills are not taught by reading articles but by "direct experience and some clear examples of what to do" (Dyer, Dyer & Dyer, 2007, p. 14). Therefore, the objective of this interactive workshop is to not only present the research, but reinforce the research by providing experiential learning activities to demonstrate the key components of high performing teams, how to create teams, and the pedagogical strategies to successfully implement teams.

References

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