

TEAMWORK INTELLIGENCE



Student-Athlete Edition

WWW.SPORTLEADERSHIP.COM

5 Rules for Leading Your Teammates

It's not enough to do your best. You must know what to do, and THEN do your best.

Contrary to what you may have heard, great leaders aren't born. They're made. Exceptional team leaders are shaped by following these five rules.

Rule 1: Be Prepared

Team leaders earn the right to lead by being prepared. The prepared leader is always in the process of improving. They stimulate improvement by always asking more of themselves. *What am I doing well? Where do I need to improve? How do my behaviors impact my teammates?* Leadership grows out of self-knowledge, character, integrity, discipline, competence and commitment to a personal vision of excellence. When these building blocks are in place you have the foundation to model the way for your teammates.

Rule 2: Build Right Relationships

The ability to effectively lead your team will be determined by the quality and character of the relationships you build. Exceptional leaders build genuine relationships with teammates based on authenticity and appreciation. Leadership is always a two-way interaction between leaders and followers—between you and your teammates. Exceptional team leaders ground interactions in respect and genuine care, and understand that right relationships emerge when everyone has a mutual influence and impact on each other.

Rule 3: Foster Integrity

Leaders function at their best when they are consistent in their values, actions, and words. Part of the sport experience is dealing with losses, failures, and disappointments. How you handle and help teammates work through adversity will influence trust and loyalty among team members. Supporting and reassuring teammates in times of doubt will help others learn, grow, and change. Acting with integrity is the glue to building a cohesive team.

Rule 4: Exert Influence

Your success as a leader will be found in getting teammates to go beyond themselves—to give more to the team than they ever believed they were capable of giving. Leadership is fundamentally about change. A common problem is that most people feel little need to move beyond their comfort zone. This requires motivating teammates by persuading and influencing them to change in some basic ways, challenging them get out of their comfort zone. Your actions and attitudes will exert influence through your personal example—providing energy by embodying high standards and demonstrating an unwavering commitment to the team's vision.

Rule 5: Know Where You're Going

The difference between being an average team leader or an exceptional team leader is knowing where you're going. Great team leaders cultivate an attractive and inspiring vision for individual excellence and contribution to the team. This requires understanding the Big Picture and using it as your road map and rudder. To motivate others to follow you need to sell the Big Picture, getting your teammates to believe in the team's purpose, vision and goals.