



Fortis Leaders

Program Overview

The Most Important Mission

Deliberately and intently spending time to make a transformational impact on our athlete's leadership and character development is the most important mission we have as coaches.

Making a positive impact on this front takes time. We need to be patient.

Sports do NOT build character UNLESS we use them to.



Program Overview - Leadership Tasks

We need to provide athletes with genuine opportunities to express leadership skills in an environment that gives them as much autonomy as possible.

Giving athletes responsibilities will lead to mistakes.

Mistakes are often *necessary* to teach the skills and habits we are trying to teach.

LEADERSHIP TASKS TO DELEGATE

Assign these tasks to your players. You can rotate players through these tasks or assign to a set of players throughout the year. Some leadership tasks will be delegated more spontaneously throughout the season (i.e. check up on an injured teammate)



Run pre-game warm-ups without coach present.

Locker room leader to make sure locker room is clean.



Locker room leader assigned to do time checks and make sure everyone is ready on time for games and practices.

Assign equipment managers to bring cones, pucks, balls, etc.



Set up and organize team gatherings during season.



If a player gets hurt, assign one of your athletes to call the injured player and make sure their teammate is feeling okay.

Designate a leader to lead push-up counts (or any other exercise) at the end of practice.





Program Overview - Behavioral Standards

Speak directly with coach.

Look coach in the eye when speaking.

As much as possible, resolve conflicts with each other before approaching coach.

Shake coach's hand.

Take ownership and responsibility for practice.

Bystander Bully Rule

Be respectful to teammates, coaches, parents, and officials.

Proactively reach out to teammates to help encourage them when they are down.



Program Overview - Team Building Activities

Key Points to Consider:

1. Separate players into groups that encourage team bonding. Place forwards with defense, older and younger players together.
2. Have one player from each group describe the strategy employed by their group at the end. This helps players work on public speaking, a key component to leadership.

Example Activity:

Build the Tallest Tower Supplies Needed: 1 box of Spaghetti and 1 bag of Marshmallows
Instructions: split your team into groups of three or four. Each group sits independently and away from the others to minimize their ability to see what other groups are doing to build their tower. Each group must use the spaghetti and marshmallows to build a tower. The tallest tower that can stand without any support besides the materials provided wins!
Suggested Time Limit: 10 minutes

Team Building Activities in Action





Program Overview - Quick Hit Lessons

Be confident in your approach.

Expect a lot from your players and they'll surprise you.

Be patient as these lessons take time to sink in and be understood.

Be OK with silence.

Find the ideal time for your group.

Add in your own personal experiences.

SPORTS LEADERSHIP SCENARIO

Negative Team Talk

Scenario: You and a few of your closest friends on the team are hanging out. One of your buddies starts talking about the game last weekend. Your teammate believes you lost the game because a couple players didn't show up to play and some just aren't good enough. Your buddy blames the loss on a few and doesn't take any responsibility.

What would you say? How do you respond in this situation?



Coach Seminar

- How to deal with behavioral problems and athletes that consistently violate standards
- Engaging parents to make this program successful
- How to effectively teach the lessons
- Elevate Player Expectations (tell them what we want them to do vs. not do)
- Player Meetings - how to have effective individual player meetings to enhance the coach-player relationship, build trust, etc.



Parent Seminar

During our parent seminars, we cover two main topics: 1) how to be an effective partner in leveraging this program to improve athlete leadership skills and character and 2) long term athletic development principles.

We go over many of the mythologies in youth sports because lack of knowledge of long-term athletic development science is a major cause of negative behaviors from parents (and players).

Player Seminar

Teams send their top 3-4 leaders in a given set of grades (i.e. 7th-9th) and those leaders spend an hour identifying leadership issues on their teams and finding ways to solve those problems.

**Pair this with a coach mid-season check-in meeting immediately after so the coaches can see the results AND brainstorm how to better their players.



Pin System

- Pins distributed by coaches to athletes who demonstrate the leadership qualities represented.
- The type of pin and quantity given depend on the age of the athlete.
- The system is designed to reward demonstration of leadership characteristics.
- The pin system is meant to be a building block to the larger program.
- Adds incentive for those who do quality work



CHOP WOOD (8U and up)

Awarded to athletes that work hard regardless of the obstacles placed in front of them. Whether losing with little time left in a game, at practice, or during gym training sessions, these athletes always put their head down and Chop Wood.



WOLFPACK (10U and up)

Awarded to athletes showcasing incredible teamwork. This can be accomplished through tactical synergy in a game situation, work ethic in practice, or as teammates working for a common goal away from the sport. We recommend giving this pin out to a "pack" of athletes for displaying great teamwork together.



HUMILITY (10U and up)

Awarded to athletes that display humility in their actions and words. This pin is specifically for athletes that are in positions of strength that display the courage to be humble in their relationships and outward behavior.



TIP OF THE SPEAR (10U and up)

Awarded to athletes that take initiative to accomplish a team goal. An athlete might help turn the tide in a game, organize a team event, or take ownership for pre-game warm-ups.



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE (10U and up)

Awarded to athletes that receive a 3.0 or higher. Each athlete may only receive this pin one time per season.



STAND FIRM (10U and up)

Awarded to athletes that stand firm for what is right in the face of adversity. This athlete may resist retaliating in a game or stand up to a bully at school.



ENCOURAGE (8U and up)

Awarded to athletes that positively interact with their teammates and help them to become better in their sport or in some other way.



TEAMWORK (8U and up)

Awarded to athletes that work together to accomplish a shared goal. This pin is interchangeable with the Wolfpack pin. We recommend giving this pin out to a single athlete for showing exemplary teamwork in a game, practice, or training session.

STICKERS & PINS

FORTIS LEADERS