



Building A Championship Team

By Chad Eberhardt

My main theory on how to develop a winning golf course team is very simple — WORK!

If your players are willing to work hard, and you give them the proper leadership and guidance, then success will result.

It is very important for the players to have a complete understanding of what they must do in order to have a successful season.

Building a winning team is something that cannot be accomplished overnight if the program is starting from scratch. Regardless of the time element involved, your program has little chance of succeeding unless you have the sole responsibility and authority of selecting your staff of dedicated people.

In order for a good head coach to have a good program he must surround himself with a good assistant. Take a look at successful teams in any sport or at any level. A common denominator can be found in the strength of the assistant coaches.

Bill Walsh, former head coach of the San Francisco 49ers, has produced many successful NFL head coaches from the assistant ranks. Or have you ever noticed how many of his own assistants the University of North Carolina's Dean Smith matches wits against on the roundball court?

Neither Walsh nor Smith loses any sleep when an assistant coach moves on to join the head coaching ranks. They feel the pride of a father. They'll continue to offer advice and share coaching tips with their former assistant. And they have plenty of confidence in their own program to continue to attract and produce many more successful assistant coaches.

There are many characteristics to look for in an assistant coach.

The first trait, **dedication**, is a must. If the person is not truly dedicated to their work, and they dread spending

many extra hours working and planning, then they are in the wrong business.

Good assistants are dedicated to the extent that they "want" to do whatever is necessary. There's a big difference between "wanting to" and "willing to" do something.

Our profession is definitely not an 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. job. The assistant who is "willing" to work a little extra is not the one I want on my staff. The assistant who "wants" to do whatever is necessary in order to be successful, regardless of the time element involved, is the person whom I want to assist me.

An assistant should constantly be attempting to improve themselves (**initiative** and **ambition**).

It is also very important for a head coach and his assistant to know that they have mutual trust and **loyalty** in each other. If you can't trust your assistant, you don't want that person around.

An assistant golf course coach must be a **sound thinker** with a **good understanding of turf management**. Your assistant should be expected to study, plan, discuss, and come up with ideas that will aid you and the team. Your program can quickly go stale and unprogressive if you don't listen and discuss all ideas with your assistant.

While managing your crew as a team in the sport of golf course management, always keep in mind that in order to get the maximum from your assistant, **you** must set a good example. Since others will follow a leader who actually leads, rather than one who tells them what to do.

I believe a head coach must work longer, harder and stay a step ahead of his assistant and the other coaches in our profession.

You must be dedicated to our sport, well organized, a sound thinker, and have the ability to delegate authority and responsibility to your assistant if you expect to build a successful program.

Be the best ... Coach! 🌿

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