

# THE POLITICS OF SPORTS FIELD MANAGEMENT - PART 4 IN A SERIES: Best Practices for Dealing with People

By Don Savard, CSFM, CGM

"Managing a sports field is easy, people make it complicated". How well we work with the people around us usually equates our success. Here are some Best Practices for Dealing with People:

1. When you try to inflict change upon your people, they will probably resist it. Consider how hard it is to change yourself and you'll understand what little chance you have of trying to change others.
2. Stop- Look- Listen, good advice for crossing railroad tracks, also good advice for dealing with people, especially when you want to effect change. Stop and think about what you want to say or do before you do it. Ask yourself whether or not something needs to be said, something needs to be said right now, or needs to be said by you. Look carefully and objectively at the situation and circumstance and ask a trusted advisor to help you with a "reality check". Listen to both what people are saying and not saying.
3. It is not always about you, what you want or even what you think (I have learned that my opinion is often irrelevant). Serve the needs of other people. To earn the respect of your people you must have an element of humanity otherwise the forces of an organization will work against you. Look out for your people because loyalty is important. Remember that you need not like everyone that you work with, work for or who works for you, but you do need to work with them.
4. We get requests all of the time. Occasionally we get some real doozies! If you are asked to do something, DO IT, DO IT CHEERFULLY and DO IT ON TIME no matter how peculiar the requests may appear to you. You are going to have to do it anyway. When you make a commitment or promise to do something... do it. Do it as promised. Do it when promised. Always keep your promises, so be careful what you promise. People remember what you say. Even if you did all the big things right, mishandling the small details will probably cost you. Remember, "A good excuse is not the same thing as a good job."
5. Avoid bossing people around. It is easier and more efficient to pull than to push. Always say "please".
6. Rewards come in many forms. A simple "Thank You" - that is sincere - is always a welcomed reward. If you don't give credit where credit is due, you will find it difficult to solicit that successful support again; Plus - it is amazing how the organization knows who really did the work anyway and you will wind up the real loser in the eyes of others
7. Communication is important. Beware of emails. Sometimes a phone call works best. Keep people in the loop and your ac-

tions transparent, it keeps small problems from becoming big problems.

8. Mind your own business. Quit micromanaging! Let other people do their jobs. Remember, allowing people the opportunity to make mistakes help them build experience.
9. Always keep your emotions under control when interfacing with others in your organization. Remember that conflict is inevitable and often healthy. Just because you get invited to an argument doesn't mean you have to accept. Always pick your battles carefully. Remember that grass is more forgiving than people.
10. Find a balance in your life. Enjoy your family, friends and the things you love.

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