

Developing Your Program's Culture  
"Uncommon Culture Yields Uncommon Success"  
Coach Chris Heaps – Russellville HS, Alabama

I've outlined the basics from his session and provided examples of each sub-topic as it pertains to the desired effect. Much of this is designed around a typical 4-year HS Varsity program, but can be viewed/established for the entering U15 player (13 yrs old) or the entering U18 player. For example, the ".036%" topic; If we consider the entering U15 player, the goal is to achieve a 60% improvement which coincides with their prime college recruiting years, thus becoming a impact college athlete. If we enact it with the entering U18 player (16 yrs old), the goal is that they continue to progress past our U18 program and reach the 60% their Junior year of college in time for the MLB draft.

1. Believing in the power of .036% - Becoming World Class\*

\*The idea that for an average athlete to become world class they must show at least a 60% improvement in ability ("getting better") over a 5 year period.

- The math:      60% / 5 years                      = 12% improvement per year  
                         12% / 12 months                      = 1% improvement per month  
                         1% / 4 weeks                              = .25% improvement per week  
                         .25% / 7 days                                  = .036% improvement per day

Therefore, chunking the large number of 60% into a more logical and "attainable" number of .036% becomes less a mountain to climb and more a bump to walk over. The idea to hammer home is that you strive/plan/work to have a .036% improvement over yesterday at a variety of skills.

2. How do you manifest success...

a. Only think about what you want?

- Replace "I" with "WE".

b. How to control your luck?

- Control what you can control, learn from the mistakes and "LUCK" isn't an excuse anymore.

3. Importance of your CULTURE...

a. You are a product of your PROCESS. No plan, lack of attention/dedication = poor product.

b. Your CULTURE drives your PROCESS. Must have buy-in and leaders in the program to be examples of what it means to be a part of the program

c. Your CULTURE and PROCESS drives your results. A failure in either one is a catastrophe and should be viewed as such.

d. Hard work beats talent when talent isn't working hard, but CULTURE beats talent without culture.

e. Your most important job: Be a salesman, sell your CULTURE (Live it!)

4. Create a culture that empowers Assistant Coaches and promotes their growth.

- Trust in the people around you, the head coach can NOT do everything themselves and thus all people in charge become head coaches of their responsibilities. Make those responsibilities clear.

5. Common Cultures VS. Uncommon Cultures... (a comparison)
  - a. Common: What most people want...
    - Coaches; Wins, trophies, records, accolades.
    - Students; Do the least -> Get the most.
    - Players; Playing time, travel ball mentality.
    - Parents; The best 8 and my son/daughter to play.
  - b. Uncommon: What the successful few have embraced...
    - “Leaders eat last” – Don’t leave until all facets of the game have been taken care of (conditioning, school work, garbage, field work, discipline, etc...)
    - “Do simple better” – The idea that you’re not trying to do it until you get it right, but you do it until you can’t get it wrong.
    - “Body language personifies your attitude” – Excuses are contagious. Pity parties detract readiness from the next opportunity to succeed.
    - “Leadership leads” – Leaders see a need that has to be met and completes the task without being asked/told to do it. (ie, Garbage in the dugouts – any trash is everyone’s trash)
  
6. Integral Components and Beliefs in the CULTURE...
  - a. It’s not the kids these days – They follow the person in charge and if the expectations are low, the results follow suit.
  - b. We get what we accept and expect – We can’t complain about lazy, late, poorly dressed, etc... if we as coaches are lazy, late, poorly dressed, etc...
  - c. Two types of behaviour; Acceptable or Correctable – Be able to identify which is which.
  - d. Work while you wait – There is no idle time, only time wasted.
  - e. If you want it, earn it.
  - f. Accept your role – If you don’t like it, work to elevate it.
  - g. Coaches coach, parents parent, players play, boosters boost – “Stay in your lane”.
  - h. Characteristics of great players – Have a clear outline and have meaningful discussions.
  - i. Bruce Lee mentality? – “I don’t fear the man who has tried 10 000 movements once, I fear the man who has done one movement 10 000 times”.
  - j. We never lose, only learn – Every “loss” is a learning opportunity.
  - k. No superstars; the Star is the TEAM.
  
7. Your CULTURE must focus an UNCOMMON level of Physical and Mental Toughness
  - a. Most mental mistakes happen when;
    - i – Physically fatigued
    - ii – Nervous or stressed
  - b. Players do not rise to the occasion WSHTF. Players fall back on;
    - i – Habits
    - ii – Training
  - c. No Excuses;
    - i – Don’t make them yourself
    - ii – Don’t let others make them for you
  
8. Continuously challenge your CULTURE:
  - a. We can’t just outwork other programs.
  - b. How will we gain the “edge” on the 5-6 other programs who can stand in the way of us achieving a championship?