

Believe It, Sell It, Demand It- Building a Culture!

Stefanie Golan

University of Minnesota

Head Women's Soccer Coaches

Dawn Crow

University of Wisconsin-
Stevens Point

What Is Culture?

- Culture by definition is the act of developing the intellectual and moral faculties, especially by education.
- What is it like to be a part of our team?
- You have to create a clear picture of what you want it to look like...as a leader, you typically know what you want it to ultimately look like...but you have to meet them where they are before you can take them where you want to go!

When creating culture you must have:

- **Intentionality**- Culture will just happen if you let it, but it typically isn't the culture you want. The best cultures are developed on purpose. As leaders, it is your responsibility to create, build, & foster the culture you want. You set the foundation; each team gets the opportunity to build upon that foundation.
- **Teambuilding**- Should be calculated just like your training...and the team must feel they get something out of it. Players should be interactive, have a platform to speak but also to listen, and there should always be a resolution at the end. If you consistently spend time on these values, they will become important to your players.
- **Values**- Be clear about what you value in your program, and provide recognition for the characteristics you value. Reinforcing what's important will make players strive to embody those values. **“You can tell what a coach values by what they are willing to lose for...”**

Must haves continued:

- **Internal Leadership**: key in creating a winning culture. Team Captains- don't let it be a popularity contest...make it about what the team needs...and make them a part in figuring out what that looks like. We must provide support to those leaders.
- **Shared Vision**-Where do we want to go? What do we want to accomplish? In order to get there, what does our daily environment need to look like? Define “above the line” behaviors. What price are we willing to pay to get what we want?
- **Define Roles**- What roles have to be filled on the team? Concept of accepting your role, but not settling for that role. Clear expectations.

Finally you must:

- **Identify strengths and weaknesses-**
 - Identifying strengths & giving value to what a team member brings
 - Identifying weaknesses & a clear plan to improve

*We all have strengths & we all have weaknesses; to maximize potential we have to maximize our strengths & minimize our weaknesses
- **Find your “WHY”** —knowing your why & knowing the why for each of your players helps steer the direction. This helps you to meet them where they are.
- **Leaving your legacy** --Concept of legacy is powerful (Senior Legacy...Group & Individual.) If someone had one opportunity to watch you play, what would you want them to say about you? How do you want to be remembered as a soccer player? As a teammate? As a person? Life is a sport—leave a legacy!

University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

Changing a Toxic Culture

- Takes a lot of energy to lead a great organization- Must excite and inspire. Must have Discipline to reinforce your core values and hold everyone accountable until you achieve the culture you want. Remember your “why.” –My **WHY**: helping players and people see their potential to handle the highs and lows, growing their confidence to choose their path in life, and helping them become productive members of our society.
- What we walked into- “I am Not the Only One,” “Yeah-But Players,” ME>WE

What We Did

- Everyone used pronouns to strengthen our vision— WE, US, OUR.
- Book Club— each class had a book they needed to read over summer and in preseason we met to discuss book and their takeaways. Created “safe zones” within book club so players could discuss without feeling they would be attacked. Our players who were seniors and staff-selected potential captains had 3 books to read. We met to discuss those as well.
- Captains were voted on after last game of preseason and during the preseason individual meetings. Additionally, players picked their starting line ups on the board so they would start to see roles coming into play. Discussion began regarding the first role each player might have on our team. (again, safety area)
- Staff met with captains once a week to lay out thoughts on guidance and to determine what they might need from the coaches to be successful.

What We Did

- Everyone created a “Legacy Post”—they do this as freshman producing a letter on how they want to be remembered. Can revise it as they go. Key points they feel they could contribute. Read those each year out loud so we can hold people accountable. Coaches did this, too! We need to be vulnerable as well.
- Get freshmen involved right away. At team meetings, it’s hard to determine what classes our players are as they truly embrace “team first.” We have them involved in the program the moment they commit to us.

--Freshman class letters at year's end

What We Did

- Pointer Speak:
 - “**q-tip**” – when player takes things personally
(credit to Becky at the University of Florida)
 - “**Don’t get stuck in your junk**” --No drama
 - “**Flush it or park it**”(who doesn’t like potty humor?!)--come back to fix it; don’t fixate on it.

Quotes we use:

- Area where we are the greatest is the area where we inspire, encourage, and connect with other human beings. Maya Angelo
- Be who you are and say what you feel- because those who mind don't matter and those that matter don't mind.—FDR presidential advisor Bernard Baruch. (people say Dr. Seuss)
- Discipline is not a punishment; Discipline is doing what you should do over what you want to do; Maturity is when what you should do is what you want to do.

Foundation for Gopher Soccer Culture

GOPHER SOCCER STAIRWAY TO SUCCESS



Selflessness

- Selflessness is the foundation of all that we do. To be a part of this team & this program, the team must always come 1st & your individual desires are secondary.
- Every single person can & will influence the environment every day by: attitude, work rate, focus, execution. For the time that we are together as a team, it is about positively influencing the environment for the team as a whole by choosing to do whatever it takes to make the team better.
- Recognize that every choice we make (on the field, in the classroom, socially, in the community, etc.) is a reflection of not only ourselves as individuals, but of the women's soccer program, this team, our athletic department, etc. Those choices/actions are also what demonstrate your commitment to this program & team. Make positive choices.
- Abide by all team rules

Mentality

- Mentality is something over which each person has complete control. We cannot control what happens to us/around us, but we have complete control over how we respond to those things.
- Each & every day, choose to compete: with yourself to be better than you were yesterday; with each other to make one another better; against whoever your opponent is on that day.
- Play because you love the game of soccer; work hard because you love to win.
- Carry the belief that there is always a way to get what we want, we have to find it & some days it is really hard...the hard is what makes it great.
- Soccer can be something that you consider to be your job, as long as you love your job. As a staff, we love our jobs, which is why we invest so much. You need to love the fact that you are investing into this; the second it becomes a sacrifice & you don't enjoy it, come see us to walk away.
- No complaining. Choose to bring a positive attitude in all facets of life. Hard work & fun are not mutually exclusive. Know it will be hard; striving for greatness isn't comfortable.

Preparation

- Get the proper rest. Studies show that elite athletes & the top performers are the ones who are consistently the best sleepers & get the most rest.
- Nutrition. Take the time to prepare the food that you will need to fuel your body with enough of the right types of fuel to not just get through sessions, but to excel throughout the season. Utilize Corey & John to ensure you are doing enough & doing it properly.
- Hydrate. Drink enough water to stay properly hydrated throughout each day. If you feel thirsty, you are already dehydrated. Replenish your fluids as you lose fluids.
- Stay on top of any medical issues with Sarah so they do not become problems.
- Warm up before the warmup if you have things that tend to be tight.
- Mentally plug in so that we get the most out of the warm up & the entire session; know what you want to accomplish out of the day rather than just going through the motions.
- Be respectful. When someone is speaking, listen. Keep the sideline clean & organized. Wear the proper attire. Say please & thank you. Time is respect.

Elevate

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- If we can always put the team 1st, bring the proper mentality to all that we do, & have taken care of everything we can control to prepare to get the job done, now you are in a position to do more...to elevate yourself & bring others along with you.
 - Work w/ staff to figure out days that would work for you to do a little bit more...whether it is before or after a session or at a different part of the day that you have free where you can invest more.
 - Strive to be one of the hardest workers on a daily basis: 1st to show up, last to leave, striving to do everything at the highest level; do 1 more than your opponent
 - Everything we do presents an opportunity for you to get better...what standard will be acceptable to you → during conditioning, lifting, technical, training, competing, warmup/cool down, training room, film, teambuilding, etc.
 - Strive to impact someone else in a positive way, ensuring that they get more out of it than they would have on their own, every single day
 - Keep the main thing the main thing...we are striving to get better everyday to set us up to experience a great deal of success...our focus when at soccer needs to be solely on that mission

Opportunity

- Every day presents us with an opportunity. It is our belief that if we commit to the 4 steps of Selflessness, Mentality, Preparation, & Elevate that we will be prepared to succeed with each opportunity.
- What are our opportunities?
 1. Daily habits create our environment
 2. Training
 3. Games
 4. Classroom
 5. Service
 6. Social

Recommended Book List for Teams

- All things Jon Gordon, but especially *The Energy Bus*, *Training Camp*, *The Hard Hat*, *No Complaining Rule*, *One Word*
- *Teammates Matter* by Alan Williams
- *Think Like a Warrior* OR *Relentless Optimism* by Darrin Donnelly
- *The Young Champion's Mind* OR *The Champion's Mind* OR *The Champion's Comeback* by Jim Afremow
- *Think Like a Champion* by Dick DeVenzio
- *Choose to Matter* by Julie Foudy
- *Classy Captain* by Sam Walker
- *Leaders Eat Last* OR *Start with Why* by Simon Sinek
- *U Thrive: How to Succeed in College (and life)* by Daniel Lerner and Alan Schlechter, MD
- All things Daniel Coyle: *The Talent Code*, *The Culture Code*, *Little Book of Talent*.
- *Relentless: From Good to Great* by Tim S Grover