

Coaching With Vision

Victory or defeat begins long before you take the field!

By Paul J. Meyer

If you've decided to be a coach, you have automatically assumed the position of a leader. And great leaders share one basic characteristic above all others: a burning desire to succeed! However, desire alone is not enough. After all, no one intentionally sets out to fail. But, unfortunately, most people are controlled by the day-to-day urgencies that derail their best intentions to reach their goals.

Success is never an accident; it is always a result of the progressive realization of worthwhile, predetermined personal and professional goals. Just knowing generally what you want to accomplish is about as effective as setting out on a vacation knowing generally where the airport is, but lacking any specific information about directions or flight schedules. Obviously, your chances of success are not good - no matter the earnest nature of your intent.

Clearly Identifying Your Goals

If you are dissatisfied with your present level of progress as a coach and as a team, chances are you have simply not clearly defined your goals. You will need to ask yourself the following questions:

#1 What Do You Want? As a coach you must know exactly what you want to accomplish. You will need to clarify your personal goals and the goals you have for your team. In other words, what is the result you are seeking?

#2 Why Do You Want It? Identifying the motivation behind your goals will provide you with the necessary perseverance to execute your plan of action.

#3 Why Do You Not Already Have It? Is there a skill missing or motivation not present? Identifying that one missing thing may tip the scales in your favor.

#4 What Are The Benefits? Self-motivation comes quickly when benefits are clear. Keeping the benefits in front of you and your team is incredibly powerful.

#5 How Will You Know When You Get There? It is important that you be able to measure your *specific progress*, whether through simple win-loss statements or more detailed statements of points scored/points missed or correct play call/incorrect play call.

#6 Where Will It Lead You? You actually may find that your initial goal is too small, and you will need to revise and alter your course.

Developing a Crystallized Mission

After you have defined your goals and objectives, you will need to clarify or crystallize your thinking by developing a mission statement. A *mission statement* is a brief but power-

ful summary of your reason for existing; the "why you exist." It will provide direction, focus, and consistency in everything you do.

To be effective, everyone on the team must participate in creating the mission statement; it must be written down so each member can understand, accept, internalize, and memorize the statement. The excitement grows as each individual sees how their personal goals and the team's goals can both be accomplished.

Creating a Crystallized Vision

Your mission statement states *why* you exist, but a vision statement *tells everyone where you are going*. The vision statement identifies your overall goals and links those to the goals of your team. It should convey a sense of urgency and destiny.

A vision statement defines the future and may not require input from the team. You as the coach and leader should decide the vision for your team by presenting them with exciting challenges and a bright future.

Defining a Crystallized Purpose

Your mission statement states why you exist; your vision statement states where you are going; now it is time to say *why you are doing what you are doing* by defining your *purpose*. Even though your purpose is involved and underlies the two previous statements, it requires the most intense and deliberate thinking and planning of all the statements. You and each person on the team must individually ask, "Why am I doing what I am doing?"

Keeping the Momentum Going

All combined, your mission, vision, and purpose statements should be less than 100 words. If you want to reach your full individual and team potential you *must* have clear mission, vision, and purpose statements and they must be written down.

Your job as a coach is to never let the enthusiasm and momentum die down. Crystallized thinking along with your mission, vision, and purpose statements moves you to action. They give you clear, defined goals and identify the "why" behind each step. They allow your team to catch your vision and to solidify what it takes to be a winner. Victory or defeat truly begins long before you take the field!

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Paul J. Meyer, best-selling *New York Times* author and founder of the Success Motivation Institute has written two dozen full-length programs plus numerous books on attitude, motivation, goal setting, management, leadership, and time management. In his highly acclaimed book, *Become The Coach You Were Meant To Be*, available at www.pauljimeyer.com, Paul shares the major goals of leadership that make you a winning coach.

