

The Number One Reason Teams Fail

By Paul J. Meyer

The game does not always go to the swiftest, the most intelligent, or the highly gifted. What, then, stops most players in their tracks?

I'm sure you've met some pretty talented people during your career or personal life. If you happen to be a coach, your job is to find that talent and make it count for your team. You might think that if you can get the most gifted players on board, you're home free. But as you probably know by now, that's not always how life works out.

There's some incredibly interesting statistics that point to the number one reason people fail despite having a lot going for them. And that reason is simply: they quit! Quitting is the No. 1 reason why people fail to reach their goals. In fact, 90% of all failure comes from quitting. So the answer is obvious: DON'T QUIT!

The people that give up and quit are usually just as capable of succeeding as those who go on to accomplish their goals and dreams. When you think about it, I believe it's fascinating that you can eliminate 90% of your chances of failure by simply not giving up, by refusing to quit!

Commitment is everything!

Commitment of both coach and players makes the difference between winning and losing every time. I've found there are five elements that comprise true commitment:

#1: Raw determination. The refusal to give up must be backed by a thorough understanding of your goals. To be effective, goals must be *written* and *specific*. When both you and your team have a very clear, concise plan of action, you will be able to overcome whatever challenges that present and stay focused and sold out.

#2: Patience. Everyone must be willing to pay the price, to work hard, and to remain committed through temporary setbacks and obstacles.

#3: A sense of pride. When each member knows they are giving their absolute best, there is cohesiveness to the team that allows great things to happen.

#4: The ability to take risks. Each coach and team player must be willing to step into the unknown and try something new. The courage to risk is always an ingredient of any success story.

#5: Knowledge that adversity is a good thing. When you face adversity, you are forced to use more of your full potential, to dig deep. Adversity, difficulty, and even temporary defeat can all be stepping stones to acquiring greater skills and success.

The buck stops here!

In addition to commitment, *taking responsibility* is an absolute must! Every successful person exhibits the trademark of

taking personal responsibility for their life and goals. No exceptions! You cannot point the finger of blame toward others or whine about your bad luck or unfortunate circumstances and advance in life or on the field.

President Harry Truman had a plaque on his desk that read, "The Buck Stops Here!" Any great leader knows that's the case. While you as a coach do not have the burden of the presidency, you do shoulder a large share of the responsibility for the outcome of your team's efforts. Bottom line: You as the coach are the responsible party.

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Real responsibility is felt on a *personal level*. You are not only responsible for who you are and how you feel, but you are responsible for your actions. You don't stop just because the minimum has been done; you model going the extra mile, of keeping your commitments, of not complaining or blaming.

And, last but not least, you show a willingness to change and grow. You cannot force other people to change, but you can demonstrate your own openness by taking advantage of new opportunities that stretch you personally and demand an increase in excellence.

Keep it real!

Those who are truly committed and take personal responsibility both on and off the field are willing to keep it real. You can always spot a winner:

- They know how to dream and to turn those dreams into reality with hard work and creative solutions.
- They acknowledge their strengths and weaknesses; they don't cover up - they face what needs to be done with courage and focus.
- They see obstacles as something to go around, over, under or through, never as a permanent road-block.
- When it's time to begin, they're the first ones to get started, the ones that make the right choices, even when the choices aren't always pleasant.

When you and your team can eliminate 90% of your chances of failure by simply refusing to quit and combine that with total commitment and personal responsibility, not only are you an incredible coach, but your team is also on its way to unlimited success!

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.pauljmeyer.com, Paul shares the major goals of leadership that make you a winning coach.

