



BEING A CHEERLEADER

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LEADERSHIP FOR TODAY'S  
**ATHLETES**

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## LEADERSHIP FOR TODAY'S ATHLETES

As a cheerleader or dancer, the word “leadership” takes on a whole new meaning. Being a leader not only on the sidelines, but in the classroom and the community as well is a vital component of your role. You are always in the public eye, and it is so important to represent your school or university to the best of your ability.

In the words of Dr. Jamie Williams, former San Francisco 49er tight end, “Leadership is like gravity - you know it’s there, you know it exists, but how do you define it?” And how you define yourself, especially in the role as a leader, is not something to take lightly.

**LEADERSHIP IS THE PROCESS OF INFLUENCING YOUR TEAM MEMBERS TO WORK HARD TOWARDS, AND BE COMMITTED TO, TEAM GOALS. TO BE A GOOD LEADER, YOU MUST TAKE PART IN HELPING YOUR TEAMMATES ATTAIN THOSE GOALS EVERY DAY.**

“It’s been my experience that the best leaders are natural leaders,” says Nicole Lauchaire, Director of Varsity.com and Varsity Wired reporter. “Leadership is critical for cheerleaders and dancers. Whether you’re cheering from the sidelines or performing at a pep rally, you must always strive to set a good example that others want to emulate.”

Being a good leader is an integral part of being a cheerleader or dancer. Though you may think the only way to be a leader is to be selected as the team captain, that is far from being the only way to prove your leadership capabilities. Everyone has the chance to be a role model.



All athletes are leaders, whether you know it or not, and that includes cheerleaders and dancers. Think about it... You’re constantly leading the crowd, encouraging people to cheer on your team, and if you’ve been involved in it for a few years, you have the opportunity to help others grow and gain the necessary skills to be successful. When you put on that uniform, you are representing your team, school, and community - you’re not just a pretty girl on top of an impressive stunt.

It doesn’t matter if you’re going to the mall or heading to the game, there will always be someone who knows someone who is friends with someone who knows your coach or administrator. So, even though you may not be wearing your uniform 24/7, you are still known as that cheerleader or dancer from so-and-so school.

Cheerleaders and dancers alike are always looked up to by younger girls. They think of you as a super star - someone they want to be like when they grow up. That’s definitely something to keep in mind, as it’s important to continually set an example for those around you, especially those younger than you.

A good leader has several characteristics. A few of them include respect for your teammates, discipline in yourself, pride for your school and community, and optimism, or looking at the good in everything. You must also exude passion in your cheer or dance skills, patience, trustworthiness, reliability, wisdom, and creativity. Without those qualities, you’re just like any other Indian waiting for the chief to tell you what to do next.

“Anyone can be a leader,” says Jenn Uselton, AACCA Certifier and former UCA instructor, “but just like anything, you have to practice at it. And it’s important to remember that it is an honor to serve and not a service to honor.”