

TEAMBUILDING

BY TOM JENSEN

I. MOTIVATING YOUNG ATHLETES

- A. Recent survey of cheerleaders ranked “to have fun” as the number one reason they wanted to participate in cheer.
- B. Fun is pivotal. If it’s not fun, they won’t participate.
- C. Skill development and fitness is a crucial aspect of fun.

II. SO, WHAT CAN YOU DO?

A. Emphasize Teamwork!

- 1. Start early, explain that teamwork is a combination of cooperation, solidarity, collaboration, and working together.
- 2. “Coming together is a beginning
Staying together is progress
Working together is success”
- Henry Ford

B. Create An Environment

- 1. “We supersedes Me”. Understand the big picture.
- 2. Develop the same sense of responsibility in every cheerleader regardless of their position. Consider them as “one team”, not JV, Varsity, competition, alternates, etc.
- 3. This is not easy because you must manage egos and it goes against human nature.

C. Maintaining Motivation

- 1. This should be one of your top priorities. Your passion as a coach is crucial in maintaining motivation in your cheerleaders.
- 2. Teach them to conduct themselves responsibly by showing respect, courtesy, encouragement, good sportsmanship, and a positive attitude. You are their role model. If you want them to display these values, you need to demonstrate these same values towards them.
- 3. Use the “Golden Moments” at the beginning and end of practice to get your message across in small bites.
 - a. Talk about what they’ve done right.
 - b. Post a daily motivational quote and discuss what it means to the team. (Or, assign a quote each week – quote book.)
 - c. Focus on doing little things well. “Little things make big things happen”.

III. IDEAS TO MAINTAIN MOTIVATION

A. Use **teambuilding** games weekly in the spring or summer when the team is in the forming stage.

1. Ball of yarn/string
2. Kudos
3. Tied
4. What I've Learned
5. Star Power

B. Use **team bonding** and **unity** exercises.

1. Daily - end of practice break
2. Team banquets
3. Pre-game or pre-competition dinners
4. Gratitude or appreciation circles
5. Pre-competition notes

C. **Positive Visualization**

1. Positive Visualization is a success technique where cheerleaders visualize performing a routine or cheer in their mind's eye.
2. The idea is to clear your mind, close your eyes, take a deep breath, and actually see in your mind and feel in your body the successful outcome you desire. The more you focus on making the visualization "real", the more effective it will be.
3. Positive Visualization is one of the most effective things your cheerleaders can do to create exactly what they want.
4. Like everything else, it takes practice. Positive Visualization can be used in all areas of their lives.

Teambuilding is a proactive method of managing conflict, leadership, attitudes, success, and problems.

RESOURCES

Books

Quick Team-Building Activities for Busy Managers, by Brian Cole Miller

Developing a Successful Cheerleading Program, by Pam Headridge and Nancy Garr

Wooden on Leadership, by John Wooden and Steve Jamison

1001 Motivational Quotes For Success by Thomas J. Vilord

UCA Advisor Coach Manual, by UCA

Websites

www.brightquotes.com

www.varsity.com