

# **BUILDING AN ANNUAL PLAN WITH BUY-IN**

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**Culture**

**Competence**

**Coachability**

# Culture

What we expect from athletes:

# Where do we start?

- Individual plan for each athlete
  - Annual plan built with flexibility
  - Training theory
    - Macrocycles, Phases, microcycles, and units.
- Ask athletes to dream.
  - What kind of runner do you want to be as a senior? (first question asked in cross country camp, freshman year)

A dream becomes a goal when you attach a plan. We bring the coaches plan and the athlete's dream together.

# Commitment

- January Meeting to establish goals
  - Choose to believe in goals
  - Choose to follow coach's plan
  - Choose to create their own plan, consistent with team goals and coach's plan
- Team First
  - Choose to submit personal/team goals
  - Choose to support, encourage, and hold accountable all teammates
  - Choose to sacrifice
- Ask
  - What can I do better this year?
    - Idea: if we expect to progress, we cannot simply "do the same"
- Understand
  - Progress, not perfection is the path
  - Honesty about lack of perfection is beneficial to "team"
  - Commitment is year-round

# “Doing the Little Things Right”

- This is an extension of “commitment”
- We choose to not “compartmentalize running”
- What are your “little things?”
  - Ours are:
    - **Accepting** and **supporting** community standards,
    - Adequate **sleep**
    - Balanced **diet**
    - **Strength** training
    - Being **prepared** physically and mentally **everyday** for practice
    - Following the **plan** both at practice and on your own
    - Equally important are **healthy relationships, respect** for authority (including parents), extending **grace** to those around us (including teammates), using **language** appropriately, living **generously** and being “**others-centered**”
    - Remembering that the goal is **progress**, not perfection.

# Why do I run?

- Asking the question:
- Our program is faith-based, and we teach that God created you and gave you your ability. Running to the best of that ability is then both a privilege and a responsibility.
- We teach biblical principles of **stewardship** and **worship** and how to integrate them with running.
- However, whether faith-based or not, this is a question that should be asked and answered.
  - Talent may enable short term success, but long term success requires both **talent** and **purpose**.

# Respect

- “Generosity in Action”
  - The goal is to give of our resources without seeking something in return
  - We strive to be “**others centered**”
    - **We wish our opponents success.** We are competitive and want to win the game, but not because our opponents are down or make mistakes. As a result, there are no secrets.
    - **We wish other sports success.** We choose not to be jealous of the spectator sports and the easy comparisons that tend to make us feel less valued.
    - **We wish our teammates success.** Position on the team is something that is outside of the athletes control, so why stress over it. Coach chooses top 7 based on what he believes is the best choice for the national meet and athlete must choose to trust his judgement
      - This often requires discussion after the fact to help athlete come to peace with decisions.
    - **We choose to be grateful.** “It is impossible to be both unhappy and grateful at the same time”  
- Anonymous

# Culture

Coach's Responsibility:

# Philosophy

- I use a “**20 years from now**” principle
  - In other words, “What will they care about 20 years from now when they look back at their IWU experience?”
  - Running is a great tool to teach values and life principles.
    - For me, much of that is integrating faith, but what is important is that the coach takes advantage of this excellent opportunity to grow men and women into responsible professionals

# Competence

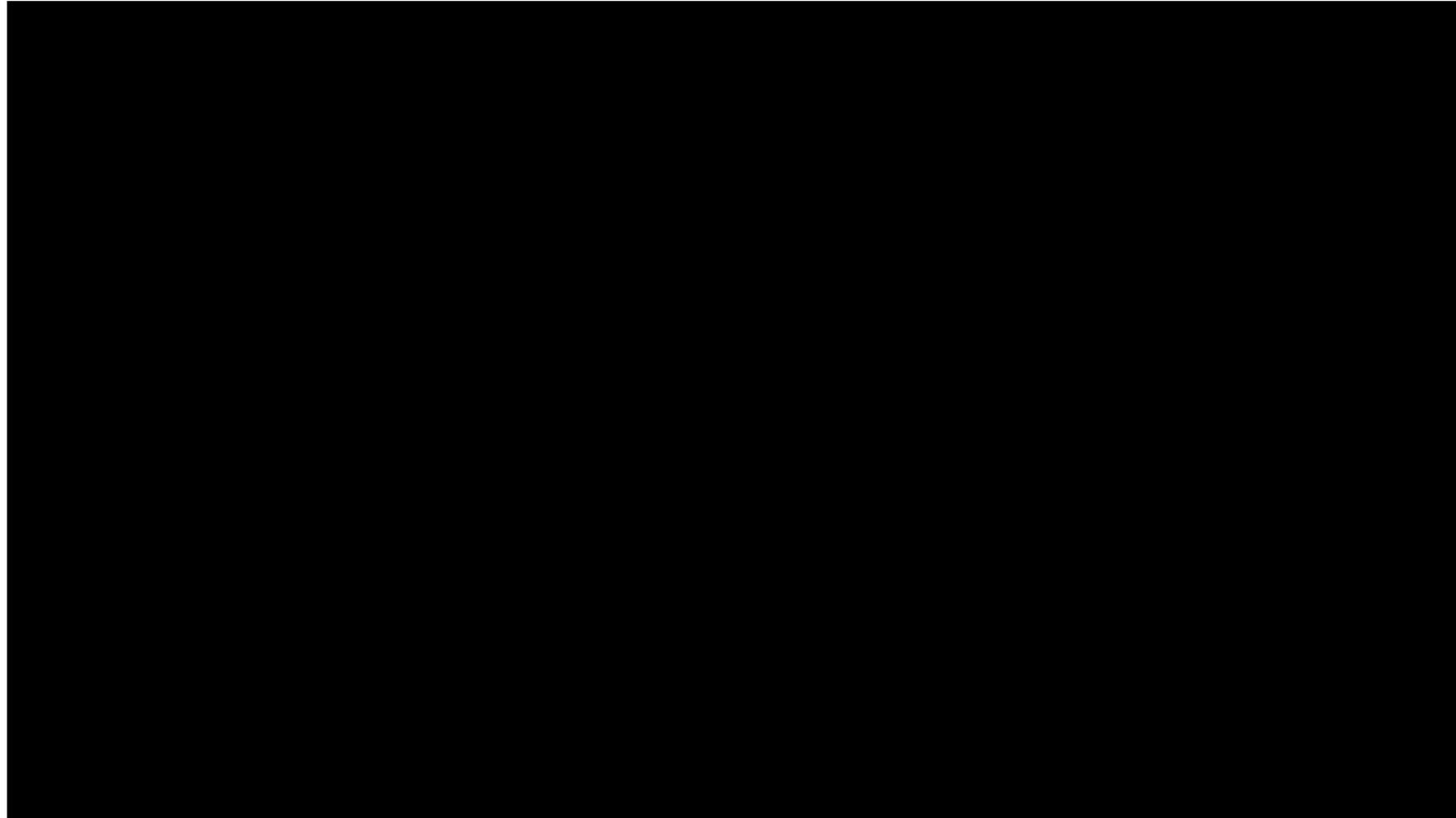
## Coach Responsibility:

- Seek **knowledge**, never stop learning
  - Use research when possible
  - Cross reference
- **Communicate**
  - Listen and consider
  - See with your ears as well as your eyes
- **Prioritize** your time

## Athlete Responsibility:

- Always be **prepared**
  - A race is a race, practice is practice
- **Knowledge**
  - Learn your sport
  - Ask “Why?”
- Work towards **independence**
  - Make good choices in a race
- **Understand** the process
  - Long term

Becca Groh - 2019



# Coachability

Coach's Role:

# Demand Buy-In

- Start with recruiting
- Don't be afraid to bypass talent that isn't willing to be coachable.
- Much of my career, I tried to *teach* coachability.
- I have learned that the athlete has to *choose* to be coachable.
  - **Good news** is that they can easily make that choice.
  - **Bad news** is that *teaching* won't be effective until they *choose*.
- I believe there is no bigger thief to the joy of coaching than athletes who are doing it their own way.
  - Maybe I'm just old and grouchy, but I no longer allow it as an option.

# Earn Buy-In

- **Be consistent**
- **Be competent**
- **Be willing to communicate**
- Demanding buy-in is pointless if you haven't earned it.
- Athletes want to trust you and your plan.
- Their confidence is largely based on believing that you know what you're doing.
- Coaching is a responsibility that should never be taken lightly.

# Coach for the Athlete

Everyone here is unique and has their own style. If I can add one thing that will help, maybe it's this:

Championships are awesome, but limited in value, athletes are complicated and difficult, but unlimited in value.

You can add your name to the history books or your positive influence to the future of your athletes who will pass that on to others. Which is a more meaningful legacy?

You may be able to get buy-in even if your coaching is about “you first”, but I believe you will enjoy coaching far more of time if you put the athletes first.

# Coach for the Athlete

Think about how you view the success of the teams you've competed on:

- You might experience it as a pleasant memory that might be fun to talk about when you are back together
- You might wish that you had felt more connected
- You might cherish the relationships that you made and still have

No matter how you view it, you aren't likely to dwell on it.

If you are coaching to build a legacy or to rack up "wins", I wonder if you aren't missing out on the joy of coaching. For me, it's about the athlete and watching them stretch, grow, and thrive in running and in life. Walking through the dark times with them and pointing directly to them (giving them credit) when they achieve in running and in life.

I am convinced that this is ultimately what earns buy-in.

# Coachability

## Athlete's Role:

- Choose to trust the plan
- Don't buy into the team itself. Instead, buy in to the program, philosophy, and "team-first" mentality.
- Ask questions of your coach, not others, when in doubt.

Adrien Howard - 2020

