The Effect An Assistant Coach Has On The Success Or Failure Of A Universities Women's Basketball Program

Rhonda J. Singleton
THE EFFECT AN ASSISTANT COACH HAS ON THE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF A UNIVERSITIES WOMEN'S BASKETBALL PROGRAM

BY

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

The author became familiar with the game of basketball at a very young age and has participated in the sport from grade school through college. As a player, the writer learned to love the game and openly sacrificed blood, sweat, and tears for the thrill of competition. Basketball is a vigorous sport, which requires both mental and physical preparation. The foundation of the game is based on strategies, athleticism, raw talent, knowledge, and fundamental skills. Successful women’s basketball teams are comprised of devoted players who are guided by a knowledgeable, motivational, and driven head coach. The relationship between players and coaches can be identified as the pulse of the team. “People acting together as a group can accomplish things which no individual acting alone could ever hope to bring about” – Franklin D. Roosevelt (Canfield, Hanson, Donelly, Tunney 2000). Team chemistry is modeled and encouraged by the teams’ existing coaching staff. Players who are impacted by coaches who compliment one another are likely to adopt such behavior amongst each other.

The author has chosen to perform an extensive research project, which will identify the leadership characteristics, communication styles, and coaching techniques of Division I women’s basketball assistant coaches. Who are they? What drives these individuals to pursue assistant coaching careers? The author also wishes to acknowledge the fact that head coaches are the spearheads of their women’s basketball programs. The following quote summarizes the effect a head coach can have on the players on their team. This quote captures the very essence of the ideal player-coach relationship. “Coach [Peck]
brings a lot of energy and excitement to our team. She motivates us so much,” guard Tishona Gregory said. “There have been a lot of days when she helped to pump me up, like in the gym, the weight room, running out on the track. Her energy definitely flows through me and the rest of the team” (Traub, 2002). The role of an assistant coach is to “assist” the head coach in achieving the established goals for the team.

Assistant coaches have numerous responsibilities and their job descriptions are extensive. Their duties entail recruiting, player development, scouting, team travel, and community service. Assistants are involved in all aspects of managing the women’s basketball program. The general expectation is for them to support the head coach in every way possible. Pete Carril stated, “help someone else, help yourself” (Bradley, 1998). It is the author’s belief that assistant coaches must be able to understand and embrace this philosophy in order to feel confident and comfortable in their current positions.

The reader is encouraged to note that the author has held the position of women’s basketball assistant coach; at the division I level for the past seven years. This study is designed to educate the reader(s) about the common personality traits, communication styles, roles, responsibilities, and life styles of a women’s basketball assistant coach. Subsequently, the author wishes to engage you the reader in an exploration of the profession she has passionately devoted herself to. Surveys, interviews, and intense literature reviews were used to assist the author in supplying the reader with the facts surrounding the collegiate women’s basketball game. Ultimately, the author has compiled pertinent research information and couples it with her professional expertise in order to create an “Assistant Coaches Guide to Success Handbook”. This manual will be
used as a resource guide to help assistant coaches to efficiently and effectively perform their jobs. “It takes real character to derive enjoyment from the pass that leads to the pass that leads to the basket” (Bradley, 1998). The author has decided to perform this study because she wishes to stimulate her personal growth, while at the same time positioning her peers to excel in this field by providing them with valuable information.

Research Question

What are the leadership attributes and communication skills requisite for an efficacious Division I women’s basketball assistant coach? This research investigation will examine the role of the assistant coach and reveal how this position affects the success or failure of a university’s women’s basketball program.

Subsidiary Questions

In an exertion to understand the collegiate Division I women’s basketball assistant coaching position, the author will focus time and energy on answering the following questions:

1. What is the ideal background for an assistant coach?
2. What are the prevailing media perceptions of coaches and players?
3. How is the women’s basketball community a distinct culture?
4. What personality characteristics do assistant coaches share?
5. How does the relationship between the head coach and assistant coaches affect the team?
6. How does an assistant coach know when he or she is ready to pursue a head coaching position?
7. What qualities and skills should an assistant coach attain in order to be successful in their career?
8. What can an assistant coach do to suffer termination from their position?

9. What personal sacrifices does an assistant coach make for the sake of his or her career?

10. What role does an assistant coach play in the success or failure of the university's women's basketball program?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to provide the reader with resourceful information based on the personal characteristics and job responsibilities of assistant coaches at the Division I level. Focus topics, which will to be methodically addressed, include an assortment of coaching, communication, and leadership styles employed by collegiate assistant coaches. The following quote can be correlated to the role an assistant coach plays within his or her women's basketball program. "Leadership means getting people to think, believe, see, and do what they might not have without you. It means possessing the vision to set the right goal and decisiveness to pursue it single-mindedly. It means being aware of the fears and anxieties felt by those you lead even as you urge them to overcome those fears" (Bradley, 1998). Assistant coaches are supporters of the program and internal motivators for change. They commit to doing the grunt work and seldom receive public recognition for their efforts, but they are imperative characters in the success or failure of the entire program.

Also note, that this project will serve as an intensive research document, which is, based on the essential work personality of Division I assistant coaches. Focal points will include, the individuals' interpersonal skills, ability to manage time, their organizational
style, and marketing flare. In addition, "Confidence is a lot of this game or any game. If you don’t think you can, you won’t"-Jerry West (Canfield, Hanson, Donnelly, Tunney, 2000). Assistant coaches must be confident in themselves as well as in the product they are selling. (I.e. the university, its women’s basketball program, and the head coach) Successful assistants are committed to the process of improvement and are open and receptive to learning and adapting to innovative ideas. A comprehensive examination of the profile of an effective assistant coach will be unveiled throughout this inquiry.

The research findings will be utilized to develop a training manual to encourage continued development of Division I assistant basketball coaches. “Everyone has the will to win, but few have the will to prepare to win”-Bobby Knight (Canfield, Hanson, Donnelly, Tunney, 2000). The job of an assistant coach is extremely demanding and it also requires a great deal of time and energy. There are no set hours, no clock to punch in and out. The expectation of the individual is to work until all the work is done, and when that is accomplished there is always more work you can do. A certain level of commitment and passion must be present in order for one to derive satisfaction from their work performance. The author strongly believes that, “if you are not practicing, just remember-someone, somewhere, is practicing, and when you two meet, given roughly equal ability, he will win” (Bradley, 1998). The author is pursuing this educational venture in hopes of improving herself professionally and wishes to arm her colleagues with the tools necessary for healthy competition.
Objectives

The intention of this study will be to examine the position of an assistant coach at the Division I level. The author will concentrate on several sub-topics throughout this discourse. These topics will provide the reader with insight on the role the assistant coach assumes within his or her basketball program. The author aims to enlighten the reader about their job description, responsibilities, and expectations to encourage progression in their women's basketball program. The author wishes to identify how assistant coaches feel about their occupation. Revealing the assistants' likes and dislikes is an essential part of this research project. The editor will solicit information about the training they received and the role their superior plays in their professional development. The editor will also address the relationships that exist between the head coach, the assistant coaches, and the players. Supplementary subjects include disclosing the varying coaching, communication, and leadership styles. Ideally the author is collecting pertinent information based on assistant coaches to establish hard facts to develop an "Assistant Coaches Guide to Success Handbook."

Definition of Terms

1. **AAU**: Amateur Athletic Union
2. **ACT**: American College Testing Program
3. **All-American**: An athlete recognized as one of the best players in the nation
4. **BCA**: Black Coaches Association
5. **NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse**: NCAA committee designed to evaluate academic eligibility requirements of college-bound student-athletes
6. **Contact:** "A contact is any face-to-face encounter between a prospect or prospect's parents, relatives or legal guardian(s) and an institutional staff member or athletics representative during which any dialogue occurs in excess of a greeting" (NCAA Division I Manual, 2002-03).

7. **Division I:** Highest level of collegiate athletic competition

8. **Evaluation:** "Any off-campus activity designed to assess the academic qualifications or athletic ability of a prospect, including any visit to the prospect’s educational institution (during which no contact occurs) or the observation of a prospect participating in any practice or competition at any site" (NCAA Division I Manual, 2002-03).

9. **Full Scholarship:** Includes room, board, tuition, books, and fees

10. **Home Visit:** "Institutional staff members visiting with a recruit and their family at their home, "a prospect's "home" is the prospect's legal residence, or the community of the educational institution in which the prospect is enrolled while residing there" (NCAA Division I Manual, 2002-03).

11. **National Letter of Intent (NLI):** "Is the official document administered by the Collegiate Commissioners Association and utilized by subscribing member institutions to establish the commitment of a prospect to attend a particular institution" (NCAA Division I Manual, 2002-03).

12. **NCAA:** National Collegiate Athletic Association

13. **Official Visit:** "An official visit to a member institution by a prospective student-athlete is a visit financed in whole or in part by the member institution" (NCAA Division I Manual, 2002-03).
14. **Prospect/Prospective Student-Athlete:** “A prospective student-athlete (“prospect”) is a student who has started classes for the ninth grade. In addition, a student who has not started classes for the ninth grade becomes a prospective student-athlete if the institution provides such an individual (or the individual’s relatives or friends) any financial assistance or benefits that the institution does not provide to prospective students generally” (NCAA Division I Manual, 2002-03). This individual is also called a *recruit.*

15. **Recruiting:** “Recruiting is any solicitation of a prospect or a prospect’s relatives [or legal guardian(s)] by an institutional staff member or by a representative of the institution’s athletics interests for the purpose of securing the prospect’s enrollment and ultimate participation in the institution’s intercollegiate athletics program” (NCAA Division I Manual, 2002-03).

16. **Recruiting Coordinator:** The assistant coach designated to coordinate or organize the women’s basketball programs recruiting efforts

17. **SAT:** Scholastic Aptitude Test

18. **Scouting:** Observing, evaluating and analyzing opponents by preparing for the competition. For example, watching game films of opponents and creating a scouting report which includes their player profiles, diagramming set plays, and identifying teams tendencies

19. **Stud:** An all-star or outstanding basketball player

20. **Title IX:** “No person in the United States shall on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination
under any educational program activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”
(Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 to the 1964 Civil Rights Act)

21. **Transfer:** “A transfer student, in application of NCAA eligibility requirements, is such a who transfers from any collegiate institution after having meet one of the conditions set fourth in Bylaw 14.5.2” (NCAA Division I Manual, 2002-03).

22. **Unofficial Visit:** “An unofficial visit to a member institution by a prospective student-athlete is made at the prospect’s own expense” (NCAA Division I Manual, 2002-03).

23. **Verbal Commitment:** Non-binding verbal commitment given by a prospect to an institution which discloses that the prospect has agreed to accept the institution’s scholarship offer, this action normally takes place prior to the National Letter of Intent signing date(s)

24. **Violation:** Two types of violations exist major and secondary: “A secondary violation is a violation that is isolated or inadvertent in nature, provides or is intended to provide only minimal recruiting, competitive or other advantage and does not include any significant recruiting inducement or extra benefit. Multiple secondary violations by a member institution may collectively be considered as a major violation.” In addition, “All violations other than secondary violations are major violations, specifically including those that provide an extensive recruiting or competitive advantage” (NCAA Division I Manual, 2002-03).

25. **WBCA:** Women’s Basketball Coaching Association
Limitations

This study is restricted because the author exclusively focuses her attention on assistant collegiate women's basketball coaches, specifically Division I. Please note that the editor believes that assistants from various levels stand to benefit from the findings in this research project. There are several divisional ranks in college women's basketball. Consider the fact that DII, DIII, NAIA, and Junior College employ numerous assistant coaches. These individuals are faced with unequal circumstances and are subject to an existing disparity of resources. Therefore, the study may provide them with useful information, but the reader is encouraged to understand that these coaches are faced with a different set of rules and guidelines.

An additional limitation, the opinions of high school coaches was also excluded from the study. The material found in this study is not directed towards high school, summer league or AAU basketball coaches. Though the information and findings of this study are useful for basketball coaches at all levels of the game. Their knowledge of the game is incredibly valuable and many college coaches would not be where they are today if it was not for their high school coach. “Many people in all walks of life will tell you that their lives were turned around by a coach who took an interest in their total well-being” (Bradley, 1998). The author can attest to being inspired by coaches who devoted their time and energy to allow her the opportunity to play a game that eventually shaped her life.

Purposely, the author neglected to collect research information concerning the personality characteristics and communication styles of collegiate men's basketball coaches. The author believes that men and women's basketball coaches are faced with an
extremely different state of affairs, despite them being required to perform the same job. Gender equity stands to improve drastically at the collegiate level. Also, please note that the author is convincingly aware of the importance of Title IX, but consciously choose not to report extensively on its existing state. However, the following, Bill Bradley, citation tends to capture the authors stance on Title IX. "Many different kinds of leadership brought women's basketball to its current place. There were the small colleges, such as Immaculata, Old Dominion, and Louisiana Tech, which made early and significant commitments to women's basketball. There were the coaches-Pat Summitt of Tennessee, Theresa Grentz of Illinois, Tara VanDerveer of Stanford, Geno Auriemma of Connecticut, and countless others-who loved the game and believed that the values it taught were gender-blind and that the excitement the women's game could generate was at least as great as that created by the men" (Bradley, 1998). The college women's basketball game has evolved and has grasped the attention of many. Its fan base is increasing due to increased media exposure and the continuing success of the Women's Basketball Association (WNBA).

Confines were also apparent throughout the research stages of this project. The author found that there are limited resources that cover the personal characteristics, socio-economic backgrounds, and work lives of assistant coaches. A "how to" manual explaining the qualifications and skills needed to succeed in this business is not available for current and future assistant coaches to use as a guide. The editor believes that there is a need for such a manual and is committed to developing "A Guide to Success Handbook" to help provide useful instructions for assistant to follow to encourage sufficient job performance. Trudi Lacey, President of LifeCoachDesigns, LLC, insists,
“The only limitations are the ones in our minds. Don’t let limited thinking cause you to live a life of mediocrity. Open your mind to all the possibilities and watch your life unfold.”
Chapter II

PERSPECTIVES AND PERCEPTIONS OF COACHES AND PLAYERS

Media and Mass Communication

In the 1980's players like Carol Blazejowski, Nancy Lieberman, Cheryl Miller, Teresa Edwards, Lynette Woodard and Anne Myers captured the attention of fans nationally. They competed in crowded arenas, which were overflowing with devoted collegiate women's basketball supporters. The players mentioned, along with many other notable individuals, are responsible for helping to elevate the women's basketball game to evolve. In 1996, the Women's National Basketball Association celebrated its inaugural season. Over the past six years, professional women's basketball players like Chamique Holdsclaw, Lisa Leslie, Cheryl Swoopes, Rebecca Lobo, and Cynthia Cooper have competed in the WNBA on television and attracted the interest of many.

Tara VanDeveer, Head Coach, at Stanford University deems that, "Women have persistently struggled for equity, particularly across the last two centuries. Though sometimes frustrated by resistance and ignorance, the struggle has nevertheless yielded steady progress. The goal for women is not to achieve matriarchy, but for opportunities to be open to us, just as they have historically been open to men. When we do receive such opportunities, we have been capable of eclipsing all expectations. Clearly, the joy and celebration of success transcends gender" (Whiteside, 1998). Media coverage increased at the collegiate level due to the emergence of a professional women's basketball league here in the United States. As a result, collegiate women's basketball head coaches faced a new challenge. Not only do these coaches aspire to win games, but now they also accept the responsibility of preparing their premier players for the
professional level. Who are the winningest active coaches in Division I Women’s Basketball? Please observe the charts shown below for a list of the Top 20 head coaches with a minimum of 5 years of employment as a Division I head coach. The author has discovered the longer a coach commits to the game, the more wins he or she is destined to celebrate. Therefore revealing that discipline, focus, and commitment warrant success.

Table 2.1 = 2002-03 Division I Women’s Basketball Winningest Active Coaches

*(Top 20 By Percentage)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coach</th>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Wins</th>
<th>Loses</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pat Summitt</td>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>788</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>.83298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geno Auriemma</td>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>98</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tara VanDerveer</td>
<td>Stanford</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>548</td>
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<td>Robin Selvig</td>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>555</td>
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<td>.77840</td>
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<td>Andy Landers</td>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>564</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>.76944</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Sweat</td>
<td>Norfolk St.</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>.75776</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marsha Sharp</td>
<td>Texas Tech</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>153</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jody Conradt</td>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>788</td>
<td>258</td>
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<td>Rutgers</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>Bill Fennelly</td>
<td>Iowa State</td>
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<td>Joe Ciampi</td>
<td>Auburn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gail Goestenkors</td>
<td>Duke</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>82</td>
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<td>Rene Portland</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>595</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Years</td>
<td>Wins</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Ponton</td>
<td>Grambling</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>109</td>
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<td>Wendy Larry</td>
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<td>407</td>
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<td>Joe McKeown</td>
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<td>Tulane</td>
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<td>St. Peters</td>
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<td>Cindy Russo</td>
<td>Florida Int'l</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>526</td>
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(Top 10 By Victories)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coach</th>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Wins</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pat Summitt</td>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jody Conradt</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Vivian Stringer</td>
<td>Rutgers</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>653</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sue Gunther</td>
<td>LSU</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kay Yow</td>
<td>North Carolina St.</td>
<td>31</td>
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<td>North Carolina</td>
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<td>Theresa Grentz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mike Granelli</td>
<td>St. Peter's</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andy Landers</td>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>564</td>
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(NCAA.org)
The coaches listed above are amongst the finest, most effective persons in the collegiate women’s basketball game. Their formulas for success may be uniquely different, but the end result is that of success. This elite group of basketball educators is responsible for providing their assistants and players alike with direction and inspiration. “The greatest good you can do for another is not just to share your riches, but to reveal to him his own” (Canfield, Hanson, Donnelly, Tunney, 2000). Effective head coaches surround themselves with people who are willing to challenge them, people who are loyal and trustworthy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Team</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Duke</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Tennessee</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>LSU</td>
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<td>Notre Dame</td>
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<td>North Carolina</td>
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<td>Vanderbilt</td>
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</table>

(WomensCollegeHoops.com - Oct. 15, 2002)

At the beginning of the 2002-2003 Women's Basketball Season the schools listed above were thought to be the nation's best. These programs, which enjoy preseason Top 25 rankings, are impacted by numerous variables that enable them to reach this peak. Many of the programs listed are considered to be high profile top tier Division I institutions. The resources are accessible for them to perform their jobs at a heightened level. A few commonalities between the women's basketball programs mentioned are
administrative and financial support, state of the art facilities, as well as the universities' academic and athletic notoriety. These essential variables are extremely influential in capturing the attention and interest of the All-American player(s).

Good players wish to be equated with reputable, competitive programs. Therefore, the institutions absent from this list must compete to get that all-star prospect in a more intuitive fashion. "In this life, the big strong guys are always taking from the smaller, weaker guys but...the smart take from the strong" (Bradley, 1998).

Subsequently, coaches who engage their brains and pay attention to minuet details stand to compete with the "Big Dogs". Assistants have to do their homework, find an angle or edge, and take the backdoor approach to recruiting all-star prospects into their programs. It is essential to research the players you are recruiting...find out who they are, what their backgrounds are, who are the individuals in their support circle, and their likes and dislikes. Persistence is the key!

"Love & Basketball"

Spike Lee and Sam Kitt produced the hit movie Love and Basketball in the summer of 2000. This movie is about chasing your dreams on and off the basketball court. The two main characters shared a passion for the game of basketball, which eventually led them to fall in love with each other. Quincy McCall and Monica Wright became the best of friends during their youth. They meet when Monica and her family moved into the neighborhood. The two engaged in competitive behavior from day one. Their first encounter took place during a game of basketball with some other neighborhood children. Quincy and his friend's thought that Monica was a boy at first
glance but later learned that she was a girl. She was the new girl on the block and she would soon be more than just the girl next door for Quincy. Monica captured Quincy’s attention with more than just her good looks and pretty smile. She impressed him by displaying her ability to play the game of basketball. She was better than the boys on the court and he had never seen a girl play the game as she did.

Quincy was quick to try to claim this beautiful young lady as his very own prize possession—his girl. He offered to give Monica a ride to school on his bike and he also insisted on carrying her books. But after they shared their first kiss Monica expressed that she was her own women and refused to be portrayed as anyone’s girl. The two youngsters began to fight because they both were confused by what they were feeling for each other. They were young, innocent, and eager to be recognized as the best player in the sport they both loved. Basketball was their common interest and it would later bring their lives together. They would grow to love each other in the compassionate way that they loved the sport. Their friendship grew strong. They would become best friends, attend the same schools, and become stars of their high school basketball teams.

Quincy is the son of a well-known professional basketball player, Zeke McCall and he is a member of an affluent family. He is an only child and his mother does not need to work, rather she enjoys the riches and wealth earned by his dad. Quincy enjoys the popularity of an NBA superstar. While in high school he drives a fancy car, wears the nicest clothes, and gets lots of attention from the pretty girls in the school. College coaches throughout the country are recruiting him heavily. Quincy is able to choose any college of his liking. He receives the red carpet treatment from almost everyone he
encounters. His parents and an enormous fan base support him. He holds his destiny in
his hands and there is no end in sight for the fame and fortune he will enjoy in the future.

Monica is a member of a working class family, otherwise known as middle-class. Her dad is a Banker and her mom retired from her catering business to become a stay-at-home mom. Monica’s mother devoted her time and energy to taking care of her family and their home. Monica was a good student and the best player on her team. But she was not very popular. Many stereotyped her as a tomboy with an attitude problem. She was an expressive, opinionated, vocal young lady. She was not concerned with getting her hair and nails done, nor did she spend time trying to date guys. She was focused on being the best ball player possible and she was motivated to make this dream become a reality. College coaches expressed interest in her as they did Quincy, but she was without a solid offer. Her attitude was a question mark in the eyes of the recruiters. She was viewed unpredictable and risky because of her cocky, animated nature.

Quincy and Monica share many similarities and various differences. The movie encourages the observer to witness an exploration of two individuals in their quest for success in love and basketball. The author will thoroughly analyze the main characters, Monica Wright and Quincy McCall. The writer will identify the categories of the cultures that each falls under, including some of the basic values each character displays. The perceptual components of the cultures for each individual will also be addressed. Subsequently, the editor will move into identifying their individual roles. Lastly, the editor will reveal the individuals dynamics within the culture.
Categories of a Culture

A culture is defined as any group of people who have a centric focus and/or a common denominator. Many different personalities can be found within a culture. The word culture comes from the word “cult” which is a group of individuals who are viewed as almost alien to the main society. Examples of a few existing cultures are as follows, philanthropists, doctors, politicians, prisoners, and substance abusers. Each culture shares a consistent amount of components. These components include similar beliefs and interests in the following areas, traditions, norms, vernacular, values, and resonance. Monica and Quincy are members of several polarized cultures. They are African American, members of a two-parent middle-class family, and athletes. The following are categories of the culture they would likely appear under:

Objective-Driven:

*Athletes* are found under this category. These persons are committed and focused on winning. The objective is to be the best player and the goal is to win the game. These individuals practice to improve their skill level daily and they enjoy being supported by others who recognize their talents-fans.

Interest-Based

*Athletes* are definitely interest-based individuals. They love the game of which they participate in. They stay abreast of all the facts involving the game by watching them on television, reading about them in the newspaper, and going to see live games in arenas throughout the country. They enjoy engaging in conversations with others who share their passion for their chosen sport.
African Americans can also be viewed as a culture bound together with common interests. The members of this culture share similar histories and tend to use a very distinct language when interacting with one another. They idolize heroes or heroines that embrace their beliefs and ways of life. Many take pleasure in eating soul-food, listening to enriching music, wearing ethnic clothing, reading specific literary pieces and partaking in various family activities.

Belief-Centered

Athletes share in a common thought process. They feel that if they train and practice daily their game will improve. Many commit to strenuous workouts in the weight room, on the track, and on the basketball court in the gym. A common theme shared is the saying that “practice makes perfect”. Many athletes will also tell you “to be the best you must compete against the best”.

African Americans have strong beliefs within their culture. These beliefs are centered on religion, education, family, and food. For example, many African American families believe that “a family that prays together will stay together”. Other common practices are performed on Sundays in many homes “food is the way to the soul and heart of the family”.

Working-class two-parent families share in the thought that “hard work pays off”. They also believe that “if you spare the rod you spoil the child”. These families are committed to disciplining their children and guiding them to become active positive citizens in our society. They strive for the “American Dream” - marriage, owning a house, surrounded by a white picket fence, raising 2.5 children and a dog.
Behavior-Based

*Athletes* engage in very specific behaviors. The two characters in the movie identify and are impacted by the "*Sphere of Influence*" related to this culture. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Subculture</th>
<th>Culture</th>
<th>Environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quincy</td>
<td>Male Basketball</td>
<td>Athlete</td>
<td>Los Angeles,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Player</td>
<td></td>
<td>California</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monica</td>
<td>Female Basketball</td>
<td>Athlete</td>
<td>Los Angeles,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Player</td>
<td></td>
<td>California</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quincy and Monica share similar behaviors as student-athletes. They live in the same neighborhood, attend the same high school and are each identified as the superstar on their basketball team. Their shared behaviors include practicing, studying, eating, sleeping, and dreaming of being the best. Individuals within cultures are subject to a variety of perceptual components. These components include the following: culture, subcultures, history, points of pride, icons/anti-heroes, significant events, self-identity, external perception, stereotypes, common/chief concerns, norms, rites, traditions, origin, credo, conflict with mainstream and confluence. In the following section, the author will identify how each of these perceptions relates to the key characters in the movie.

**Perceptual Components**

* Cultures – the act of developing by education and training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monica Wright</th>
<th>Quincy McCall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African Americans</td>
<td>African Americans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child of a two-parent family</td>
<td>Child of a two-parent family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle-class family</td>
<td>Upper-class family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletes</td>
<td>Athletes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sub-cultures – interrelated group of an existing culture**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monica Wright</th>
<th>Quincy McCall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female basketball player</td>
<td>Male basketball player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New kid on the block</td>
<td>Pro-players son/popular kid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**History – a chronological record of significant events, legacy/starting points**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monica Wright</th>
<th>Quincy McCall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Best friends</td>
<td>Best friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being recruited for college &amp; choosing to attend USC</td>
<td>Being recruited for college &amp; choosing to attend USC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breaking up in college</td>
<td>Breaking up in college</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Points of Pride – memorable events or moments in the individual’s life**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monica Wright</th>
<th>Quincy McCall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Receiving a scholarship offer letter from USC</td>
<td>Dad playing pro in NBA/ his role model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking a charge to win the game and the respect of her coach &amp; teammates, earning a starting spot</td>
<td>Deciding to attend USC with Monica and follow in his fathers footsteps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduating college &amp; going overseas to play pro basketball</td>
<td>Confronting father’s adulteress behavior &amp; making the decision to leave school to enter the NBA draft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing in the WNBA</td>
<td>Playing for the Los Angeles Lakers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Icons/ Anti-heroes – these individuals play a significant roll in the lives of the characters**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monica Wright</th>
<th>Quincy McCall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Icon = Magic Johnson</td>
<td>Icon = Zeke McCall his father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-heroes = Sidra her USC teammate &amp; her mom</td>
<td>Anti-hero = Zeke McCall his father</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Significant Events** – events that impact the character and alter their perception of reality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monica Wright</th>
<th>Quincy McCall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; day of school – kissing &amp; fighting with Quincy</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; day of school – kissing &amp; fighting with Monica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going to the Spring dance with a college boy, but later enjoyed her 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; sexual experience with Quincy</td>
<td>Going to the Spring dance with a popular girl, but noticed Monica and later made love to her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USC teammate injuring her knee which lead to an great opportunity for her</td>
<td>Dad caught cheating on his mom &amp; lying to him to his face, mom revealing the pictures as proof</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confronting her college coach about her feelings &amp; being awarded the starting point guard position</td>
<td>Reaching out for Monica to help deal with his family issues and being hurt because she decides to obey her team curfew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quincy breaking up with her unexpectedly in college</td>
<td>Announcing he would leave school early to turn pro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding out that Quincy was engaged to be married and challenging him to a game of basketball for his heart</td>
<td>Injuring his knee in the pros, returning home for rehab, to get married, but agreed to Monica’s one-on-one challenge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Self-Identity** – the views one has of his or herself or themselves

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monica Wright</th>
<th>Quincy McCall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confident</td>
<td>Confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambitious</td>
<td>Conceited/ Convinced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ball Player</td>
<td>Competitive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**External Perception** – the way others view the individual

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monica Wright</th>
<th>Quincy McCall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bad Attitude/Emotional/Fighter</td>
<td>Stud/ “The Man”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocky/Arrogant</td>
<td>Masculine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smart &amp; Pretty</td>
<td>Sexy/Hot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Stereotypes** – give identity to the culture from the environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monica Wright</th>
<th>Quincy McCall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tomboy</td>
<td>Dumb Jock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesbian</td>
<td>Player/Womanizer/Ladies Man</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Common/Chief Concerns** – issues the character faces

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monica Wright</th>
<th>Quincy McCall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fitting in and contributing to her new USC</td>
<td>Excelling on the basketball court, winning games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>basketball team, winning games</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trusting Quincy after she caught him with</td>
<td>Making the decision to enter the NBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>another girl</td>
<td>Draft &amp; turn pro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confronting her mom about not supporting her at</td>
<td>Confronting his dad about cheating on his mom, deciding to become his own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>her games &amp; trying to accept her mother’s choice</td>
<td>man, and disowning his father who he once viewed as his idol/role model-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to become a house wife rather than run her own</td>
<td>schism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>catering company</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balancing her love for the game with the</td>
<td>Breaking up with Monica, because he believed that she choose her team over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>love and desire she feels for Quincy</td>
<td>him</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Norms** – patterns or behavior that repeat themselves

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monica Wright &amp; Quincy McCall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Game warm-ups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superstitions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Rites** – a ceremonial act or action, rituals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monica Wright &amp; Quincy McCall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth of their daughter/Parenthood</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Traditions** – beliefs or customs handed down, an inherited pattern of thought or behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monica Wright</th>
<th>Quincy McCall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Her mother passing on her grandmothers pearls as</td>
<td>Offering to give Monica a ride to school on his bike and insisting that he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a symbol of womanhood &amp; beauty for her to wear at</td>
<td>carry his girlfriends books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>her Spring Dance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going through freshman initiation while playing</td>
<td>“What woman wouldn’t want to be recognized as Quincy McCall’s lady” - a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on her USC basketball team</td>
<td>woman vs. a trophy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are also common traditions practiced in the sport of basketball. These include the following:

- Wearing uniforms
- Playing in basketball sneakers
- National Anthem being played before each game
- Being awarded trophies/medals for winning or all-star performances
- Cutting down the net after winning a championship game
- Receiving hats, t-shirts, rings/watches for conference or national championships
- Shaking the opponents' hands after games as a symbol of sportsmanship

**Origin** – rise, beginning, or derivation from a source

Dr. James Naismith invented the game of basketball in 1891. Naismith wanted to create a game for students that did not rely solely on strength. He needed the game to be played indoors in a relatively small space. The first basketball game was played with a soccer ball and two peach baskets served as goals. In 1936, basketball was introduced at the Berlin Olympics. Today basketball has grown to be recognized as one of the world's most popular sports. People that participate in this game are identified as basketball players, hoopers or ballers.

**Credo** – a set of beliefs

- There is no “I” in team
- We are only as strong as our weakest link
- This is more than a game, it is a way of life
• Practice makes perfect
• Only the strong survive
• It is us against them
• Just Do It
• Playing time is earned

**Conflict with Mainstream – a clash between opposing elements or ideas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monica Wright</th>
<th>Quincy McCall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monica’s mother disapproved with the way she dressed</td>
<td>Quincy was disappointed with his dad for cheating on his mom &amp; lying to him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and wore her hair. She wanted her to stop being</td>
<td>about it. He was angry with his dad for trying to make him into the man that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a tomboy &amp; act more feminine. Monica was comfortable</td>
<td>his father could not be for him and his mother. He would no longer view his</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with who she was &amp; enjoyed being viewed as a</td>
<td>dad as an icon or his role model, nor would Quincy allow him to be a part of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“ballplayer”. She was a confident, outspoken young lady</td>
<td>his life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and refused to follow in her mother’s footsteps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Confluence Factors - a combination where a culture and society create a synergistic effect**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monica Wright</th>
<th>Quincy McCall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dressing like a young lady for the high school spring</td>
<td>Deciding to give break off his engagement with the flight attendant and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dance…doing her hair, putting on makeup, and wearing a</td>
<td>marrying his childhood sweetheart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beautiful dress</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standing up for herself and expressing her true</td>
<td>Choosing to return to college and get his degree while being a supportive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feelings to Quincy before his wedding</td>
<td>husband and father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Dynamics Within a Culture (Basketball Players)</td>
<td>Monica Wright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td>Completed high school and college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student of the game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Frame of Reference</strong></td>
<td>Knowing the rules of the game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge of the opponent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowing what it takes to win</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Game preparation and strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identity</strong></td>
<td>Basketball uniform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A basketball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Braids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sweat suits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Common Interests</strong></td>
<td>Basketball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Athletic Scholarship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Their relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Playing professionally overseas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WNBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support</strong></td>
<td>Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teammates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unity</strong></td>
<td>Friendship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intimate relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Love for Quincy and the game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Encouragement</strong></td>
<td>Coaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quincy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trust</strong></td>
<td>Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quincy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perceptions</strong></td>
<td>Superstar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Smart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beautiful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arrogant/cocky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tomboy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emotional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is important to note that the same person can have various roles within a given culture. These roles include advocates, stakeholders, disciples, resisters, adversaries, and catalysts. Advocates are positive voices in a culture and they are responsible for the immersion of beliefs amongst the culture. Stakeholders are generally investors of the culture; they promote confluence with the culture and society. Representatives of a culture are known as disciples. These persons take pride in echoing the message of the culture, otherwise viewed as resonance. The resister is the individual who constantly questions the culture. This act of dissonance is deliberate and intended to disclaim the beliefs of the culture. An adversary is an individual who clashes with the culture. This person openly disagrees with the cultures tenets. Then there is the individual known as the catalyst, this person is an activator within the culture and brings about change.

Conclusion

Monica Wright and Quincy McCall shared love for each other and both individuals were equally commitment to the game of basketball. Over the years they faced many obstacles, including a breakup, family problems, distance, and other people. These hurdles served as temporary roadblocks for the couple. Monica spent time playing professionally overseas before returning to the United States to play for the Women’s National Basketball Association. Quincy left college early to play for the Los Angeles Lakers and eventually suffered a knee injury, which encouraged him to become more focused on his future. Ultimately, they managed to capture their dreams, share true love, get married and raise a family. Their friendship and admiration for on another was a consistent throughout the movie. They valued the sport, their families, and each other. Monica and Quincy successfully managed to choose a life of love and basketball!
A College Coaches’ Guide to Success or Failure

The author has learned to think in general terms and then attack the situation in a specific manner. It is beneficial to look at the big picture and then break things down into little parts. It is imperative for persons to learn how to communicate effectively within an organization. Individuals can manage to improve their professional communication skills through active participation, reading, assignments, and work observations. The thing that stands out most in the author’s mind is the thought that “Time and energy are the two most precious commodities that anyone can bring to work” - Donald N. Lombardi, PhD. It is amazing to be able to view coworkers as superstars, steadies, and nonplayers. In this selection the editor will identify and explain specific characteristics of a college coach. The author will do this by using pact factors to explore their behavioral tendencies. This behavioral exploration will provide the reader with insight on how perception becomes reality in the eyes of others impacted by the coaches’ behavior.

The word “PACT” is derived from four words- pride, accountability, commitment, and trust. (Lombardi, 2001) Pact factors are known as individuals’ tendencies. Pride in this instance means that the individual is passionate and genuinely invested in the organization. Accountability is defined through the individuals’ actions towards the organization. This person is accountable and responsible for his or her actions in relation to upholding the organizational mission and objectives. Commitment is broken down into four constituent groups-Customer-patients, the organization, the team-department, and the individual. Trust is extremely essential in leadership development and employee relations. A trusted leader must be authentic, straightforward, consistent and clear.
For the past six years, the author has coached women's basketball at the college level. These experiences have enabled the author to learn a great deal about the profession. The editor has had the opportunity to observe and interact with many coaches throughout the country, and has gained pertinent insight about the characteristics of a successful coach as compared to those of a coach destined for failure. The writer will use pact factors to express the difference between a good coach versus that of a bad coach. Please note that "good" in this sense means that the coach is effective and successful in the identified area. On the other hand, one should view "bad" as a coach who possesses tendencies that are ineffective and unsuccessful. To further explain the coaches' position in each situation the author will equate the tendency to the role of a nonplayer and that of a steady or superstar.

A nonplayer is defined, as a coach who has questionable performance, is self-centered, and set on eradicating the system. This coach is an expert at wasting time and energy. The steady or strong player displays satisfactory work performance, strives to succeed, and is committed to supporting the system. The superstar is superior to all in his or her approach to work endeavors. The superstar is a stellar performer, thrives on challenge, and defines the system. Tendencies that appear on the left throughout this discourse are to be perceived as what superstars and steadies need. (Good) The tendencies, which are listed on the right, are those that the nonplayer wants. (Bad)

Inspiration vs. Intimidation

A coach who is inspirational is one that is able to inspire his or her players and staff members to strive to be their best. This coach shows patience, encouragement, and
support to all he or she encounters. His or her work ethic reflects the behavior he expects others to portray. This coach believes in reaching goals through motivating others from within and convincing them to believe in themselves. The mentality revealed is that "we are all in this together...and together we can do whatever it is we have set out to accomplish". This coach is very confident in his or her abilities and technical expertise. He or she is willing to share their knowledge with the coaching staff and players to be able to tap into their strengths and encourage them to participate without reservations. This individual can help a player to perform better through building the player's confidence and insisting that he or she focus on the particular task(s). For example, if a player was struggling on defense and was performing poorly this coach would identify this as an area the player needs to improve in. This coach would share in the responsibility of improving this area of weakness. This can be done through talking one on one with the player, identifying their flaws in a private film session, and walking them through the areas needing correction on the basketball court. This coach would also point out that no one is perfect and that practice will promote improvement. The inspirational coach (steady/superstar) will be able to convince the player to work towards getting better without the player feeling bitter, hurt, or insulted.

There are coaches who use intimidation and fear tactics to encourage players to improve. The author finds this behavior to be extremely ineffective. Players are no different than normal people with feelings. They are emotional creatures that deserve to be shown decency and respect. For example, a coach who addresses a player, a weak defender, by humiliating him or her in front of the team in a practice will fail to encourage the player to improve. The player will shut down and tune this coach out
because their feelings are hurt and they are embarrassed. Screaming, yelling, and threatening a player to play defense is not teaching them the required skills needed to be a successful defender. The attitude of “It is my way or the highway” is a clear sign of a coach who lacks the ability to inspire players to develop their game. This coach’s position will be short lived because the players will eventually become tired of receiving such poor treatment. They will rally together and complain to the administration about the coach’s inability to treat them properly and fairly. This coach (nonplayer) will be disciplined for their actions and likely lose his or her job because of their intimidating behavior.

**Consistent vs. Inconsistent**

Consistency is a must in the coaching profession. A coach must possess this trait in order to be trusted and respected. This individual has a sense of rhyme and reason when dealing with people. A consistent coach does not come with surprises. The players and staff know what to expect from them. This coach takes pride in treating all players equally. He or she has a written set of rules and guidelines that all are expected to follow. The players are informed of the expectations and know that if the lines are crossed there are consequences for their actions. In this case, the coach expresses that for every action there is a reaction, for every problem there is a solution, and for every decision there is a consequence. This thought process is accepted and appreciated by the players because they feel that their coach’s behavior is consistent and fair. For example, a bench player and a starter were caught drinking at a local bar and both are underage. The administration brought the situation to the coach and requested that the coach reprimand
them. The consistent coach would express their disappointment in the players and punish them accordingly by referring to the manual consisting of team standards. Both players would have to do ten hours of community service and sit out the next game. The punishment would be the same for the starter as it would for the bench player. This coach (steady/superstar) would be able to maintain the respect of the rest of the team by sending the message that all players will be treated equally.

An inconsistent coach given the same set of circumstances may have chosen to handle things in an entirely different manner. This coach may chose to suspend the bench player from the team indefinitely to send a message to the rest that this type of behavior is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The coach would then treat the starter totally different from the way he or she treated the bench player. The starter would not receive a suspension or be required to complete ten hours of community service. The inconsistent coach (nonplayer) decides that he or she will lecture the player on what is right and wrong, keep him out of practice for that day, and require him or her to write a written apology to the athletic director and the team. This player would then be allowed to travel with the team and compete in the next game. This type of inconsistent behavior displayed by a coach will have a direct impact on they way the players perceive him or her. The result will be that they see that there is different treatment for different players. This behavior is unacceptable and will promote ill feelings towards the coach within the team. This coach has failed to demonstrate the core values of being trustworthy, credible, and fair. It is evident that this coach cares about wins and loses, as opposed to equal punishment for the same crime- consistency. This team will eventually fail because there
is separation amongst them, which has stemmed from the coach who will suffer the same fate.

**Dependable vs. Unreliable**

A coach who is dependable can also be described as one who is responsible. This coach is committed to his or her job and takes pride in the work that he or she does. When it comes to task oriented assignments this coach knows how to cross his or her T’s and dot their I’s. This coach believes in coming to work early and has no problem with staying late to accomplish a task. He or she is prepared and interested in the weekly staff meetings. In these meetings this coach is able to obtain information and bring something fresh and new to the table. This coach is eager to share his or her perspective of things and is also open to receiving advice from others. Players can depend on this coach to be there in times of need and rely on his or her consistent behavior. It doesn’t matter if the player needs to talk to the coach about school, things that are taking place in their personnel life, or basketball- it is known that this coach is available and reliable. Players appreciate having someone in their lives that they feel they can depend on. This coach can be viewed as a mentor or role model to the members of the team. This coach’s (steady/superstar) behavior helps to foster a healthy environment for the growth and maturation of his or her players.

An unreliable coach is one that fails to show that he or she is reliable and responsible. This coach has trouble accepting responsibility for incomplete work and inconsistent behavior. The word “ownership” is absent from this coach’s vocabulary. One can identify an unreliable coach by paying close attention to the number of excuses, mixed messages, and lies this coach tells. This coach will come to work late without
providing an explanation or making a phone call. Leaving work early and submitting incomplete work are also characteristics of this coach. For example, an unreliable coach will tell you that he or she was unable to contact a recruit because the number in the player’s file has changed or is disconnected. Though this information may be true, the unreliable coach will not attempt to contact the player’s school or coach to obtain a working number. In this example the unreliable coach (nonplayer) has given an excuse for failure to do his or her job. This coach has successfully displaced the blame and has refused to admit that he or she could have done more to rectify the situation. Players and staff members alike cannot trust the unreliable coach. This individual is selfish, narrow minded, and lazy. The characteristics of an unreliable coach are a hindrance on the teams’ developmental process. If a coach refuses to pull his or her weight and fails to do their job then the coach deserves to be fired.

**Solution Formulation vs. Problem Reliteration**

A coach is responsible for a group of young ladies or men; dealing with as many as fifteen different personalities at a time is part of the job. You are challenged with the responsibility of trying to provide a nurturing, educational, and competitive environment for them all. When dealing with so many individuals from diverse backgrounds and upbringings one is subject to have to address a fair share of problems. Problems within a team are inevitable, the important thing for a coach to know is that finding a solution to the problem is as important as the problem itself. A coach who is effective in solution formulation is one that has the ability to identify a problem and create probable solutions to resolve the situation. This coach (steady/superstar) finds a way to attack the situation
positively and professionally. The solution will be in the best interest of all parties involved in the scenario.

For example, imagine that one hundred and fifty dollars was stolen from the women's basketball locker room. No one has admitted to taking the money or seeing someone else commit this crime. The problem has been brought to the coach and the team is expecting the coach to solve it. This coach will call a meeting with the team to discuss the situation openly and honestly. This meeting will allow the team the opportunity to provide the coach with insight on the situation and their feelings towards it. The coach will also have the chance to express his or her disgust and disappointment with this situation. If evidence towards a culprit isn't revealed then the coach must use his or her expertise to come to some sort of resolution. An effective coach would suggest that the money be returned to the person privately and discreetly by the end of the day. If this doesn't happen then the team is responsible for taking care of the problem. This means that all players would be required to give the victim ten dollars a piece to cover the missing amount. This decision will hold the team accountable for each other and likely make the victim feel better. The message will get across that what one does ultimately affects them all both on and off the basketball court.

A coach who participates in the use of problem reiteration would have handled this situation differently. This coach would question why the money was stolen and avoid coming to any solution to the problem. The coach would avoid dealing with the problem and would state that things happen and he or she is not responsible for looking after a player's personal belongings. The team would be constantly reminded that there is a thief amongst them and be told that the lockers in the locker room are there for them
to lock up their personal items. The team would experience tension and uneasiness with each other because the issue was never resolved. The money was stolen and the culprit got away with one hundred and fifty dollars. The victim is crushed and wants to place the blame on someone, while the team is speculating and pointing fingers at each other. This coach (nonplayer) has allowed his or her team to self-destruct because he or she wanted to deal with “why” rather than “what we are going to do” to resolve the problem. Avoidance on the part of the coach is an ineffective way to manage a team. The consequences of this behavior can result in the coach losing control of the team. The players will police themselves and come to their own solutions regardless if they are good or bad.

Positive vs. Negative

A positive coach can be described as someone who is patient, supportive, encouraging, and dedicated to his or her players. This coach has the ability to find good in situations that could otherwise be considered adverse. When things go wrong, as they often do, this coach has the ability to persuade his or her players to see the positive things as opposed to focusing on the negative things. A positive coach is poised and confident and displays a sense of calm in his or her demeanor. The players respect this coach and they are willing to listen and learn from this individual. This coach’s style is effective because when making decisions he or she has the program’s best interest in mind. Being positive is strength for this coach and his or her behavior can result in a team being strong and confident. For example, imagine the positive coach’s team lost a game at the buzzer to a rival team. The team was crushed and sat in the locker room in disgust with tears in
their eyes. How the coach enters that locker room and what he or she decides to say is critical to the team’s morale. The positive coach (steady/superstar) is not happy with the loss and decides to address the players using a serious yet compassionate voice. “We lost a game at the buzzer tonight and I can see that you are all disappointed. You all probably feel that we should have won tonight but we did not. We must learn from this loss and take the feelings that you have right now into practice tomorrow. Pick your heads up and commit to competing against each other in practice as you do in games. You never gave up out there tonight and together you fought to the very end. This behavior will not go unnoticed and it will result in many victories for us in the near future. Let’s keep our heads high and work to improve. Bring it in-one, two, three, together!” This team will be able to take ownership for the loss, learn from their mistakes, and grow from the experience.

A negative coach is one who is narrow minded, opinionated, argumentative, rude, and forceful. This coach uses fear as a motivational tool to influence his or her players to perform. Appearing threatening or unapproachable and being boisterous are tactics used by this coach to get the message out that he or she is in charge. This coach will punish his or her players for questioning his or her authority and is extremely impatient with the team’s failure to achieve set goals. A negative coach often places the blame on others for his or her shortcomings; rarely will he or she admit to being at fault. For example, the negative coach’s team lost at the buzzer to a rival team and found his or her team in the locker room with their heads down and tears in their eyes. This coach would storm into the locker room ranting and raving while placing the blame on the team of losers. “You all need to wipe your eyes and stop acting like babies. We lost tonight because you all
refused to box out and play defense. That team was not better than you and there is no reason for this loss. You are destroying my record with your lack of effort and hustle. That was the worst display of basketball I have ever seen in my life. You looked like a high school team and you have people thinking that I haven’t taught you anything. Get your clothes on, forget about showering—you stunk up the floor and now you might as well stink up the bus. We will practice at 6 a.m. tomorrow and it will be one to remember. I promise you that!” This negative coach (nonplayer) has managed to separate him or herself from the loss by pointing the blame at the team. This behavior will encourage a team to dislike their coach and will negatively affect the team as a whole. The players will question their abilities, sulk, hang their heads, and feel mistreated. Some may decide to quit the team, others will soon transfer to another school, and the remainder will lose their love for the game entirely. A negative coach is mentally abusive, cruel, and selfish. There is no place in college basketball for coaches like this.

In conclusion, the author wants the reader to walk away with a clear picture of an effective or successful coach in comparison to a coach who is ineffective and destined for failure. A coach who is destined for failure will display the following tendencies. He or she can be viewed as a nonplayer because their actions are not in the best interest of the system. This individual thinks in terms of “me” rather than “we”. This coach tends to be negative, intimidating, inconsistent, unreliable, and often reiterates problems. He or she is very good at wasting time and energy. This coach is selfish, narrow minded, and stubborn. A coach who is not respected and trusted by his or her team has failed to
succeed in this business. A career change should be considered because this individual will be chased out, fired, and replaced because of his or her ineffective behavior.

A successful coach displays tendencies that are extremely effective in any work environment where one has to interact with people. Players are no different than clients. They are the reason why we are employed and we are here to serve them. A steady or superstar coach is one who is inspirational, consistent, dependable, positive, and has the ability to formulate reasonable solutions. This coach is conscious of the needs of others and is willing to go above and beyond the call of duty. This individual is a role model and a mentor to the players he or she coaches. Pride, accountability, commitment, and trust are portrayed by their work ethic and passion for their career. This coach is successful because he or she loves what they do for a living and it is not just a job rather it is a way of life.

The editor believes that an effective coach takes the time to get to know the players as people as well as student-athletes. Caring about their development as young adults and encouraging them to apply themselves both on and off the basketball court is essential. Some players see their coach as a mentor and a role model. They know that the office door is always open for them. When coaches have a positive rapport with their players the players are more willing to learn. The author has played at the college level, graduated from a reputable university, and has committed many years to the game of basketball. Players are confident in the author’s ability to coach them, respect and trust them, and help them to develop their game.
Cultures Of Assistant Women’s Basketball Coaches

The author selected to include personal narrative in this portion of the dissertation and therefore opted to write this section from a first person perspective. My career in coaching was shaped from my childhood experiences. Growing up in the “Big Apple” was not easy. I was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York in the Bedford Stuyvesant section, which is otherwise known as “Bed Stuy Do or Die”. I guess the nickname for my area tells it all. Life was rough; money was tight; the streets were dark, and trouble always seemed to be readily available. Witnessing someone getting shot, stabbed, or robbed was a normal occurrence in my hood. There were too many children running the streets unsupervised and I was one of them. I am a member of a big family, one of eight children. My grandmother raised us all, but do not think for one second that my parents were not in the picture. They were...only their role was not much different than mine. Grandma looked after them too, along with my aunt, cousins, distant relatives and every other person in need on the block.

During my youth I learned to dream and set goals for my future. Grandma was my inspiration to make a better life for myself. She taught me to always respect others and to say thank you when someone did something nice for me. She encouraged me to practice patience, to focus on my schoolwork and to always strive to be the best. I observed her interactions with people and noticed that she always spoke in a strong voice, maintained eye contact throughout the conversation, and showed a great deal of compassion to the individual she was speaking with. I would later adopt these mannerisms as my own, because I knew that they would help me in my quest for success.
My time spent on the streets was not as bad as one may think. I actually picked up a few skills while I was out there. I learned to run fast from trouble, dodge cars that were racing from the scene of some crime, and fight any and everyone that messed with me. I was a tomboy, rough and confident. I could beat the boys in almost any sport we played, which included football, baseball and my favorite basketball. Having “game” was not enough for a girl. You had to be able to talk the talk and walk the walk. So I mastered the art of “BS”. That’s right, I learned to talk “smack” while doing damage on the basketball courts. I gained the respect of the boys; the girls and the grown men who would bully kids and make them get off the court so they could play. “I got next”, I would scream as my friends looked at me in amazement. “Are you crazy”, they would say as they stared at me puzzled. “No”, I would answer,” They are big and strong, but that don’t mean they are better... watch!” I stood my ground and made my way onto the court and I showed them all that I could play. Actually, I discovered my ticket out of the ghetto. I would do well in my schoolwork and play basketball in high school. I would line myself up for an athletic scholarship and be able to choose any college I wanted.

During my four years at August Martin High School, I led my team to four New York City Championships and three State Championships. I earned national recognition as an All-American in the sport of girl’s basketball. The recruiting letters came pouring in, and the phone calls soon followed. Out of all the solicitors one lady grasped my interest and demanded my attention. She was friendly, outgoing, persistent, and extremely knowledgeable. She was passionate about the university she represented and proud to be an alumnus of the institution. I was moved by her energy and trusted that she knew what was best for me. So I accepted the scholarship offer and signed the National
Letter of Intent papers. Her name was Regina Miller, and she was an assistant coach for the Lady Monarch Women’s Basketball team at Old Dominion University. Coach Miller was able to persuade me to relocate to Norfolk, Virginia and join one of the most popular women's basketball programs in the nation.

Her role in my life became much more than just that of an assistant coach. Our relationship grew from player and coach to student and mentor. She and my grandmother are my role models. I cannot remember wanting to be a coach, but I can recall wanting to touch the life of another in the ways she has touched mine. I graduated from college and pursued a career in counseling. This type of work was fulfilling, but I needed something more. I missed the game of basketball and wished to bring it back into my life. Regina Miller was now a Head Coach at Western Illinois University in Macomb, Illinois. She had a vacancy on her staff and needed an assistant coach. The timing seemed right, and the opportunity was one of a lifetime. She hired me as her assistant coach, and I have accumulated over seven years of experience in this position. Being an assistant coach is more than just a position; it is a way of life. Assistant coaches are unique individuals who can be observed and identified as a culture.

Categories of the Culture

Objective-Driven:

Assistant coaches embrace this philosophy. The job of an assistant coach entails recruiting prospective student athletes, scouting opponents, on-court coaching, counseling players and participating in various community outreach programs. The underlying theme amongst these individuals is they are willing to sacrifice their time,
effort, and energy for the good of the program. They are extremely competitive beings whose shared goal/objective is to win. For example, assistant coaches believe that the players they recruit will make a huge impact on the success or failure of the program. Therefore, assistant coaches commit to recruiting the best player(s) suited for their program. Adding talented players to an existing team can lead to increased victories for the season. The more wins a team gets the more its program is recognized and admired nationally. In this business everyone is striving to be the best, and coaches and players alike are motivated by the challenge of earning a championship.

Interest-Based:
Assistant coaches share common interests. These interests include a love for the game of basketball, a willingness to meet new people, and the desire to teach and instruct players in practice as well as in games. They enjoy promoting participation within a group for a common goal and embrace the pleasures one can obtain from teamwork. For example, assistant coaches will often watch basketball games on television, read basketball articles in the newspaper, in sports magazines and on the web. Even during their free time/down time they will engage in lengthy conversations about their job and sport. They live, love, and dream the game of basketball.

Experience-Centered:
Many assistant coaches are former players; therefore, they possess first hand knowledge of the sport. The majority has participated in the sport at the middle school, high school, and college levels. Assistants know what it is like to be a member of a team. They have
experienced the joy of victory and the agony of defeat. Many can recall their relationships with their coaches during the years they assumed the role of player. Some may admit to being inspired and encouraged by these individuals, while others hold memories of disappointment and rejection. Every assistant coach has a story to tell. I believe that their decision to become a coach resulted from their experience as a player. Please note that there are assistant coaches who have never played the game. These persons obtain experience through observations, reading literature, attending camps/clinics, and from being a fan of the game.

**Behavior-Based:**

Assistant coaches are easy to identify. Members of this culture are usually effective communicators both verbally and written. They pay close attention to detail while watching games. They spend lots of time evaluating talent and establishing professional working relationships with other coaches. Assistants gather information, design innovative plans of action, and are skilled in the techniques of persuasion and motivation. These individuals are normally single professionals who are willing to travel and work long hours. Others are married with children, but they are as devoted to their teams as they are to their families. Assistant coaches tend to dress alike. They wear clothing or athletic apparel with their school logos visible. For example, Seton Hall University is sponsored by Adidas; therefore, its coaches wear polo shirts, t-shirts, shorts and sweat suits displaying the Pirate/university and Adidas logos. Assistant coaches have recently accepted cell phones into their cultural behavior patterns. Many spend numerous hours talking on these phones while in gyms, restaurants, hotels and cars.
| **Individual Dynamics Within a Culture**  
**Assistant Coaches** |  |
|---|---|
| **Education** | Completed high school, undergrad/graduate school  
Former college players |
| **Frame of Reference** | Knowing the rules of the game  
Knowledge of the opponent  
Knowing what it takes to win  
Designing team practice plans  
Game preparation and strategies |
| **Identity** | Wearing a suit, dress, or skirt to games  
Sweat suits, t-shirts, shorts, & sneakers  
Polo shirts with school logo & khaki pants  
A whistle, clipboard, & playbook  
A work bag, cell phone, pen, pencil, & pad  
Basketballs, water bottles, & practice plan |
| **Common Interests** | The sport of basketball-games & practice  
Networking with peers & coaches  
Relationship with head coach, staff, & players  
Recruiting-negotiation & persuasion  
Making telephone calls & writing letters  
Traveling |
| **Support** | Family  
Friends  
Players  
Staff  
Fans |
| **Unity** | Women’s Basketball Coaching Association  
Competitive by nature  
Desire to win  
Agony in defeat  
Sportsmanship |
| **Encouragement** | Family  
Friends  
Fans  
Peers |
| **Trust** | Self  
Team  
Staff |
| **Perceptions** | Knowledgeable  
Multi-tasked  
Experienced, skilled  
Encouraging, motivational  
Tough, strict, opinionated  
Committed, loyal |
Perceptual Components

Culture – the act of developing by education and training

Women’s Basketball Assistant Coaches

Sub-cultures – interrelated group of an existing culture

Former College Players
Women’s Basketball Fans

History – a chronological record of significant events, legacy/starting points

AIAW
NCAA
Title IX

Points of Pride – memorable events or moments in the individual’s life

Nationally ranked recruiting class
Winning seasons
Promotion/raises/bonuses
Graduating senior players

Icons/ Anti-heroes – these individuals play a significant roll in the lives of the characters

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assistant Coach Icons</th>
<th>Assistant Coach Anti-heroes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geno Auriema</td>
<td>Jerry Tarkanian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marianne Stanley</td>
<td>Bobby Knight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Donovan</td>
<td>Clem Haskins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leon Barmore</td>
<td>Cheryl Littlejohn</td>
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</tbody>
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Significant Events – events that impact the character and alter their perception of reality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title IX</th>
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<tr>
<td>NCAA Championships</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Letter of Intent Signing Dates</td>
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</table>
**Self-Identity** – the views one has of his or herself or themselves

- Knowledgeable/skilled
- Outgoing/personable
- Motivational/inspirational

**External Perception** – the way others view the individual

- Professional/multi-tasked/organized
- Confident/self-assured/convincing
- Compassionate/giving/patient

**Stereotypes** – give identity to the culture from the environment

- Dishonest/liar/fast talker
- Insensitive & demanding
- Smug/arrogant/boastful

**Common/Chief Concerns** – issues the character faces

- Recruiting prospective student athletes
- Relationship with players & staff
- Losing games/season/poor reputation
- Promotion & salary increases
- Being fired/replaced/looking for a new job

**Norms** – patterns or behavior that repeat themselves

- Attending coaching seminars, camps and workshops
- Practice & game preparation
- Coaching philosophy/style

**Rites** – a ceremonial act or action

- Coach of the Year Banquet
- NCAA Convention & Final Four
- Athlete Awards Ceremonies

**Traditions** – beliefs or customs handed down, an inherited pattern of thought or behavior

- National Anthem being played before each game
- Shaking opponents hands after games
- Cutting down a net after winning a championship game
Media Day- introducing the new players, discussing returnees & revealing teams goals

Origin – rise, beginning, or derivation from a source

Dr. James Naismith invented the game of basketball in 1891

Credo – a set of beliefs

| There is no “I” in team |
| Practice makes perfect |
| We are only as strong as our weakest link |
| Playing time is earned |
| Basketball is 90% mental & 10% physical |

Conflict with Mainstream – a clash between opposing elements or ideas

| Coaches make more money than professors/teachers |
| Coaches are treated as privileged individuals |
| Coaches drive fancy cars, stay in lavish hotels and eat in the finest restaurants |

Confluence Factors- a combination where a culture and society create a synergistic effect

| Coaches encourage players to compete on the basketball court & in life |
| Coaches discipline their players & persuade them to become responsible adults |
| Coaches challenge their players to overcome adversity and become victorious/successful |

Assistant Coaches Culture as it Applies to Business

Image

Assistant coaches are very active in promoting and selling the image of their university.

For instance, assistants will portray the university as a clean, safe, comfortable educational environment when pitching to a recruit. They will also insist that their facilities are state of the art, their academic programs are reputable, and their staff is experienced and committed.
Customers

Customers are identified as high school/AAU coaches, recruits, athletic representatives, sponsors and fans. These individuals are key players in the eyes of every basketball program. Assistant coaches are responsible for meeting the needs and wants of the university’s athletic department. It is important to design a formula for success when addressing the demands of these customers. A program's reputation relies heavily on word of mouth transactions between the targeted audiences/customers.

Product

The actual university and women’s basketball program can be viewed as the product. For example, Seton Hall University is a Catholic School located in South Orange, NJ. The atmosphere is scenic, clean and professional. The classroom sizes are conducive for learning. Sports programs are highly recognized amongst the campus environment and the surrounding areas. The athletes attend classes, win big, and graduate.

Identity

A program's identity can be observed as intelligent, serious, competitive, and professional. Usually the program's identity is comparable to that of the head coach and its university community. For example, Pat Summitt is a demanding disciplinarian who utilizes the hands on, “in your face” approach with her team. Her assistants embrace this identity and advertise it while on the recruiting trail.
**Personality**

Assistant coaches share similarities in their personalities. Many of them possess excellent people skills, display effective communication techniques/styles and have high energy levels. They are also perceptive, accountable, adaptable, and innovative. Team orientation is also a common behavioral trait amongst assistant coaches.

**Acculturation**

When a new assistant is hired and joins a staff, he or she is introduced to the personality of the existing culture of the staff members and the team. This new employee is trained to understand office procedures, rules/guidelines, staff expectations and goals. The head coach is normally responsible for the orientation of this coach. The assistants act as advocates, stakeholders and disciples in this scenario. Their role is to ensure that the new assistant coach adapts and conforms to the existing norms of the work environment.

**Climate**

The climate within a successful women’s basketball office is one where the assistants are competent, personable, organized and effective. These qualities ensure that work will be completed in a timely manner, the players’ needs are met, and everyone on the staff is well informed.

**Communication**

Communication is the key to action. Assistant coaches are extremely skilled communicators. It is essential for this culture to display efficient nonverbal and verbal communication skills. These interpersonal skills include active listening, reiteration, empathy, and appropriate gesture use. For example, making eye contact, tracking and head nodding.
Functional Sub-Cultures

The functional sub-cultures found within women’s basketball programs are as follows:

- Athletic Director/ Senior Women’s Administrator
- NCAA Compliance Officer
- Strength & Conditioning Coaches
- Sports Psychologist
- Athletic Trainers
- Academic Advisors
- Marketing & Promotions Personnel
- Sports Information Director
- Administrative Assistant/Director of Basketball Operations

Leadership

Assistant coaches lead by example. They are responsible for modeling the behavior expected from the players. Their leadership style must display loyalty to the team, commitment to the program, and a shared vision with the head coach. A leader also obtains the ability to delegate assignments, present creative ideas, and put into practice independent judgments. Leadership is a perceived strength of an assistant coach.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Psycho-Graphics</strong> (what kind of people)</th>
<th>Outgoing, knowledgeable, competitive, good interpersonal skills, former players, sports fans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary Needs</strong> (aspirations)</td>
<td>Win a National Championship(s) Winning season(s) Talented recruits Positive recognition/reputation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secondary Wants</strong></td>
<td>Media coverage National rankings/Top 25 Polls Raises &amp; promotions Graduating players</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Effectiveness</strong> (quality)/<strong>Efficiency</strong> (fast, timely, does it work)</td>
<td>Pay attention to details Research prospects Product value-University &amp; WBB program Presentation &amp; appeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Short Term vs. Long Term</strong></td>
<td>Winning season vs. Creating a dynasty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emergent Markets by Culture</strong></td>
<td>Recruits Parents Coaches Fans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Image</strong> (internal)=<strong>Identity</strong> (external) 1-10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Radioactive Mistakes</strong> (things that can destroy image/counter market)</td>
<td>Violating NCAA Rules &amp; Regulations Abusing players verbally/physically Stealing money Being dishonest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maximums</strong> (rules to follow/3 absolute important)</td>
<td>Attractive Entertaining Educational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Magic</strong> (ultimate confluence of culture, commerce &amp; communication)</td>
<td>“Basketball + Books = Success”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

The effectiveness or ineffectiveness of an assistant coach can result in the success or failure of a university’s women’s basketball program. Flourishing assistants represent the five basic values of knowledge, decency, industry, fortitude and integrity. They also apply the Practical “C’s” of Communicology, which include confidence, consistency, creativity, charisma, commitment, and competitiveness. These individuals are open, compassionate, focused, knowledgeable, and enthusiastic (Persuasion Matrix-Sender Tenets). Assistant coaches transmit valuable receiver facets in their deliverance of the programs message including history, mutual benefit, visualization, explanation, and comparison. Assistants are excellent facilitators and they are responsible for the resonance of their women’s basketball program. They also focus on receiver dynamics, which are also known as assessment facets. The key focal points are survival, quality, participation, need, want, esteem, and growth potential. Assistants are faced with the challenge of improving the status quo. They devote enormous amounts of time and energy to their programs.

I have been a member of the assistant coaches’ culture for the past seven years. As a child I learned to compete, focus, negotiate, and set goals. My role models/mentors, grandmother and Regina Miller, taught me to be trustworthy, respectful, accountable and proud. I have carried these behavioral traits into my chosen profession and have been able to enjoy positive results. The job of an assistant coach is more than just a career; it has become a way of life! The work is intense, time consuming, and challenging, but the rewards and recognition are priceless.
Chapter III

FIELD RESEARCH PRACTICUMS

Description of the Survey

This survey is part of a Master’s Thesis Project, which seeks to discover if assistant coaches are receiving the necessary job training and supervision in order for them to be successful. It is also aimed at revealing if the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of an assistant coach can result in the success or failure of the university’s women’s basketball program.

Part I of the survey includes ten statements which focus on the assistant coach’s feelings about his/her position, salary, job responsibilities and relationship with the head coach. The rating scale ranged from strongly agrees to strongly disagree. All participants were instructed to circle the answer that best describes their feelings regarding the statement. For each statement, participants choose one of the following answers listed (A-E): “SA” for Strongly Agree; “A” for Agree; “N” for Neutral; “D” for Disagree; or “SD” for Strongly Disagree.

Part II of the survey was designed to collect specific information about each individual participating in the survey. Such questions were geared toward revealing the assistant coach’s age, gender, affiliation, title and years of employment as a collegiate assistant coach. The assistant coaches were also asked to disclose their interest in receiving an “Assistant Coaches’ Guide to Success Handbook.” The Results of this survey will be used to help the author develop the “Assistant Coaches’ Guide to Success Handbook.”
Sample

The purpose of the survey was to solicit quantitative responses from at least one hundred Division 1 assistant coaches. This relevant information will be used to help the author to identify with the feelings and concerns of the targeted population. The data will be assessed to gather the professional opinions of the individuals working within the collegiate coaching profession, specifically the assistant women’s basketball coaches. The author plans to compile and correlate this information to aid in the design of an “Assistant Coaches Guide to Success Handbook.”

Analyzing the Results of the Survey

During the 2002 NCAA (National College Athletic Association) National Convention and Women’s Basketball Final Four, the author encouraged 140 assistant coaches to complete a survey. The assistant coaches responded to the survey in-person. Each participant answered the 10 statements and all of the general information questions which appear on the survey. After collecting each of the completed surveys the author compiled the responses to each statement and each question. The author then was able to calculate the appropriate percentage for each response that appeared in the survey.

Description of the Head Coaches Interview Questions

The author feels that in order to design an efficient and effective “Assistant Coaches Guide to Success Handbook” it is pertinent to solicit valuable information from the assistants’ superiors, the Head Coach. The author designed specific interview
questions to gather the head coach's feelings and expectations of their assistant coaches.

A total of nineteen open-ended questions were developed for the consultations. The interview questions are divided into three main categories, which are based on the head coaches: a) Background Information, b) Leadership Style and c) Assistant Coach Criteria. The author believes that obtaining the background information of head coaches interviewed is vital for understanding their level of experience and existing job situation. The editor and the subject performed the interviews in person and over the telephone.
Chapter IV

RESEARCH RESULTS AND OUTCOMES

Assistant Coach Survey Question Results

The author has calculated the responses to the survey that was distributed at the Women’s Basketball National Convention and Final Four Championships in San Antonio, Texas. The questions were designed to discover how assistants feel towards the following issues: job training, their relationship with the head coach, existing lines of communication, player coach relationships, coaching philosophies, and recruiting. Additional topics addressed include the assistants’ knowledge of NCAA rules and regulations, ability to use sick time, and salary concerns. One hundred and forty assistants opted to complete the survey. The results shown below represent their opinions regarding the coaching profession.

PART I: SURVEY QUESTIONS

Statement 1: I feel that I was adequately trained for my position as an Assistant Coach.

- Strongly Agree (Answer A) – 41 respondents = 29%
- Agree (Answer B) – 55 respondents = 39%
- Neutral (Answer C) – 24 respondents = 17%
- Disagree (Answer D) – 16 respondents = 12%
- Strongly Disagree (Answer E) – 4 respondents = 3%
The results to this question disclosed that the majority (sixty-eight percent) of the respondents choose “strongly agree” and “agree.” These responses revealed that most assistant coaches felt that they were adequately trained for their position. Seventeen percent of the assistant coaches stood on neutral ground, which the author will interpret to mean that no formal job training took place or these individuals trained themselves. Fifteen percent of the respondents choose disagree and strongly disagree. It is clear that these coaches believed that adequate job training never took place or was never offered.

Statement 2: I have a healthy professional working relationship with the Head Coach.

- Strongly Agree (Answer A) – 69 respondents = 49%
- Agree (Answer B) – 40 respondents = 28%
- Neutral (Answer C) – 19 respondents = 14%
- Disagree (Answer D) – 8 respondents = 6%
- Strongly Disagree (Answer E) – 4 respondents = 3%

Seventy-seven percent of the respondents selected strongly agree and agree. These individuals believe that they have a healthy professional working relationship with the Head Coach. Fourteen percent of the participants remained neutral on this question, which leads the author to believe that they were not willing to divulge their true feelings about the existing relationship. Nine percent of the assistants choose disagree and strongly disagree which revealed that they were unhappy with their present relationship with the Head Coach.
Statement 3: The Head Coach values my opinion in regards to the operations of our women's basketball program.

- Strongly Agree (Answer A) – 63 respondents = 45%
- Agree (Answer B) – 46 respondents = 33%
- Neutral (Answer C) – 19 respondents = 13%
- Disagree (Answer D) – 8 respondents = 6%
- Strongly Disagree (Answer E) – 4 respondents = 3%

Seventy-eight percent of the respondents choose strongly agrees and agrees. These persons believe that the Head Coach values their opinion in regards to the operations of the women's basketball program. Thirteen percent selected neutral and did not wish to make their feelings known with their answer to this question. Nine percent of the respondents selected disagree and strongly disagree. This revealed their belief that their opinion was not appreciated and/or utilized by the Head Coach in the programs operations.

Statement 4: The Head Coach and I openly communicate on issues relating to the program.

- Strongly Agree (Answer A) – 56 respondents = 40%
- Agree (Answer B) – 47 respondents = 33%
- Neutral (Answer C) – 24 respondents = 17%
- Disagree (Answer D) – 9 respondents = 7%
• Strongly Disagree (Answer E) – 4 respondents = 3%

Seventy-three percent of the assistant coaches believe that they are able to communicate openly on issues relating to the program with the Head Coach. This means that the majority of the respondents are open and willing to voice their opinions to the Head Coach. Seventeen percent of the respondents picked neutral and were unwilling to take a stand. These assistants tend to keep their feelings to themselves and/or will agree with the Head Coach’s thoughts and beliefs. Ten percent of the participants choose disagree and strongly disagree which unveiled that they do not communicate openly with the Head Coach.

Statement 5: I have the same coaching philosophy and style as the Head Coach.

• Strongly Agree (Answer A) – 15 respondents = 11%
• Agree (Answer B) – 56 respondents = 40%
• Neutral (Answer C) – 36 respondents = 26%
• Disagree (Answer D) – 26 respondents = 18%
• Strongly Disagree (Answer E) – 7 respondents = 5%

Fifty-one percent of the participants choose strongly agree and agree. This group represents half of the assistants surveyed and their responses to this question disclose that they believe that they have the same coaching philosophy and style as the Head Coach. Twenty-six percent of the assistants selected neutral which can be interpreted that they share some of the same views but they may also possess others. Twenty-three percent of
the assistants chose disagree and strongly disagree for this question. These assistants felt that their coaching philosophy and style was totally different from that of the Head Coach. Here forty-nine percent of the respondents do not agree with the head coach’s philosophy and style. Interestingly, they are hired to assist the Head Coach in all aspects of implementing his or her vision for the entire program. One can assume that almost half of the respondents are working in a situation that they themselves do not believe in.

**Statement 6: I know what the Head Coach wants for the program in terms of recruiting prospective student-athletes.**

- Strongly Agree (Answer A) – 72 respondents = 51%
- Agree (Answer B) – 53 respondents = 38%
- Neutral (Answer C) – 11 respondents = 8%
- Disagree (Answer D) – 2 respondents = 1.5%
- Strongly Disagree (Answer E) – 2 respondents = 1.5%

The results to statement number six are as follows. The majority of assistants (89 percent) strongly agreed and agreed, “I know what the Head Coach wants for the program in terms of recruiting prospective student-athletes”. This means that most of the assistants surveyed are on the same page with the head coach in the area of recruiting. Eight percent of the respondents choose neutral for this answer, which leads the author to believe that they are uncertain when it comes to the programs recruiting needs. Only three percent of the assistants selected disagree and strongly disagree. In this case, the
individuals were willing to admit their lack of knowledge to what the head coach desired from the recruiting process.

Statement 7: Considering player-coach relationships, I am comfortable with the way the players are treated within our program.

- Strongly Agree (Answer A) – 59 respondents = 42%
- Agree (Answer B) – 53 respondents = 38%
- Neutral (Answer C) – 14 respondents = 10%
- Disagree (Answer D) – 11 respondents = 8%
- Strongly Disagree (Answer E) – 3 respondents = 2%

In evaluating the responses above, the results showed that 80 percent of the participants were comfortable with the way the players are treated within the program. Ten percent choose to keep their opinion private by selecting to remain neutral. A total of 10 percent of the assistants choose disagree and strongly agree. Here one can gather that at least 10 percent of the assistants are dejected with the way the players are treated within their basketball program. One can assume that these individuals will choose to express their ill feelings about the treatment of players, work in silence and withhold their disgust, or leave the program for a more suitable situation.

Statement 8: I have a clear understanding of all the NCAA Rules and Bylaws.

- Strongly Agree (Answer A) – 68 respondents = 48%
- Agree (Answer B) – 50 respondents = 36%
• Neutral (Answer C) – 15 respondents = 11%

• Disagree (Answer D) – 6 respondents = 4%

• Strongly Disagree (Answer E) – 1 respondent = 1%

Do assistant coaches have a clear understanding of all the NCAA Rules and Bylaws? Eighty-four percent of the respondents disclosed that they are confident in this area by selecting strongly agree and agree. Eleven percent claimed neutral for their answer. This group of assistants has a clue about the NCAA rules and bylaws but they admit to not being as particularly familiar with them. These assistants would probably refer to the NCAA Guidelines Manual and ask their athletic department compliance officer for rule interpretations and guidance. Five percent of the assistants revealed that they failed to educate themselves by choosing disagree or strongly disagree as their answer. Despite these findings, all assistants are required to pass a yearly certification test, which is proctored in an open book fashion. Therefore, all assistants should have a clear understanding of the guidelines to which they are expected to abide.

Statement 9: I am allowed to utilize my accrued vacation and sick days.

• Strongly Agree (Answer A) – 64 respondents = 46%

• Agree (Answer B) – 34 respondents = 24%

• Neutral (Answer C) – 24 respondents = 17%

• Disagree (Answer D) – 11 respondents = 8%

• Strongly Disagree (Answer E) – 7 respondents = 5%
Seventy percent of the assistants selected strongly agree and agree. One can assume that these individuals have mastered the skill of time management. They are able to balance their work responsibilities while fulfilling their personal ones. On the other hand, one could question the level of commitment this assistant coach has in the program. Thirty percent of the respondents claimed neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. One can be led to believe that this cluster tends to sacrifice their personal time and health for the sake of the program. These assistants are known to keep long hours, take work home, request minimal days off, and only call in sick when their condition is severe. For these assistant coaches, their job is their life.

Statement 10: I feel that my current salary is sufficient for the job I perform as an Assistant Coach.

- Strongly Agree (Answer A) – 19 respondents = 14%
- Agree (Answer B) – 29 respondents = 21%
- Neutral (Answer C) – 30 respondents = 21%
- Disagree (Answer D) – 35 respondents = 25%
- Strongly Disagree (Answer E) – 27 respondents = 19%

The minority of the respondents (35 percent) revealed that they were satisfied with the salary they receive for the job they perform. The percentage of assistants who choose strongly agree and agree, may be in great situations were their team is successful and the school is willing to compensate them for their hard work. These assistants may also have lots of experience. The majority of respondents (65 percent) disclosed that they don’t
feel their salary is sufficient for all that is required in their position as an assistant coach. Twenty-one percent of respondents claimed neutral. This group may not be willing to share their feelings on salary. Forty-four percent of the assistants uncovered that they are disgruntled when it comes to their salary. They feel that they are overworked and underpaid.

Additional comments/suggestions provided by survey participants:

- I have also been a Head Coach; therefore I was able to utilize my experience in my current position.

- Salaries...depend on location and experience-that question is a little difficult to answer.

PART II: GENERAL INFORMATION

Age:

- 21-25 (Answer A) – 19 respondents = 14%
- 26-30 (Answer B) – 62 respondents = 44%
- 31-35 (Answer C) – 37 respondents = 26%
- 36-40 (Answer D) – 12 respondents = 9%
- 41-45 (Answer E) – 7 respondents = 5%
- 46+ (Answer F) – 3 respondents = 2%

Gender:

- Male (Answer A) – 98 respondents = 70%
- Female (Answer B) – 42 respondents = 30%
Affiliation:

- NCAA I (Answer A) – 125 respondents = 89%
- NCAA II (Answer B) – 3 respondents = 2%
- NCAA III (Answer C) – 6 respondents = 5%
- NAIA II (Answer D) – 3 respondents = 2%
- JC/CC (Answer E) – 3 respondents = 2%
- Other (Answer F) – 0 respondents = 0%

How many years have you been an Assistant Coach?

- 1-3 (Answer A) – 56 respondents = 40%
- 4-6 (Answer B) – 41 respondents = 29%
- 7-9 (Answer C) – 20 respondents = 14%
- 10-12 (Answer D) – 12 respondents = 9%
- 12-14 (Answer E) – 5 respondents = 4%
- 15+ (Answer D) – 6 = 4%

Which assistant coach position do you currently hold?

- 1st (Answer A) – 56 respondents = 40%
- 2nd (Answer B) – 53 respondents = 38%
- 3rd (Answer C) – 24 respondents = 17%
- Graduate (Answer D) – 4 respondents = 3%
- Volunteer (Answer E) – 0 respondents = 0%
- Other (Answer F) – 3 respondents = 2%
Would you be interested in receiving an "Assistant Coaches Guide to Success Handbook?"

- Yes (Answer A) – 132 respondents = 94%
- No (Answer B) – 8 respondents = 6%

Conclusion

The respondents in this survey were eager and willing to participate. Many of them requested to be informed of the survey results. The assistants were glad to share their feelings and wished the author the best of luck in developing a manual specifically for them. Ninety-four percent of the assistants surveyed expressed interest in receiving an "Assistant Coaches Guide to Success Handbook." Some even asked if the manual was available now and how much it would cost them. The survey process has helped the author to identify with the assistant coaches' feelings, wants and needs. Their responses to this survey will assist the author in many ways. The manual will definitely serve as a teaching tool and informational resource for all interested parties. The assistant coaches input, coupled by research, interviews, and my personal experience will ensure an educational thesis project.
Women’s College Basketball Head Coach Interview Question Results

The author spent valuable time interviewing five active head coaches who represent the varying levels of current Division I women’s basketball programs. Wendy Larry (Old Dominion University), Regina Miller (University of Las Vegas Nevada), Phyllis Mangina (Seton Hall University), Cathy Parsons (Howard University), and Dawn Staley (Temple University) all agreed to share their knowledge and expertise during the interview portion of this discourse. Their responses will assist in educating the reader about the role and responsibilities of a head coach, and the expectations they have for their assistants. The author designed the interview questions by focusing on the head coaches’ background information, leadership style, and assistant coaches criteria. The results are as follows:

Background Information

Question 1: How long have you been a Head Women’s Basketball Coach?

The coaches interviewed have accumulated a total of sixty-three years of Division I head coaching experience, a shared average of thirteen years of service at the collegiate women’s basketball level. Uniquely, four out of five of them have gained vast experiences in the field while holding an assistant coaching position. UNLV Head Coach, Regina Miller, revealed that she had served as an assistant coach in three different women’s basketball programs before deciding that it was time to branch out and try her own coaching philosophy. Phyllis Mangina has served as the head coach of her Alma Mata, Seton Hall University, for the past eighteen years. She took her first head coaching position at the tender age of twenty-five. She admits that the opportunity came knocking and she jumped to the chance to lead the program she played for, the program she prides
and loves. She states that the location, school, and Big East Conference influenced her. Cathy Parsons, Head Coach at Howard University, insists that she felt a yearning inside and believes that she was born with the desire to manage her own program. Dawn Staley had no college coaching experience before taking on the position of head coach at Temple University. She is a gold medal Olympian and current member of the WNBA Charlotte Sting. She has compiled three years of collegiate coaching experience to date and reveals that she approached the position as a challenge, which she admits, drives her. She feels she has given her life to this game and enjoys being put in a position to share the knowledge she has received. She proudly stated that she is indebted to the women's basketball game.

**Question 2: What do you like most about your job?**

When asked what they liked most about their job, the head coaches responded in the following ways. Regina Miller enjoys being able to teach and work with young people or rather people in general. Wendy Larry states that her job provides her with the ability to be in a teaching environment with young people. She has the opportunity to influence them with the life lessons we can learn through athletics. She also feels very passionate about bench coaching and admits she loves the competition, being on the edge. Cathy Parsons shares in the beliefs of Coach Miller and Larry. She revealed that she likes being able to impact people by helping to develop a generation of great people. She also embraced the fact that her job gives her the opportunity to build her own legacy. Phyllis Mangina likes that her job experiences change every year...not the same old thing everyday...that it is not a “normal” 9am -5pm career. Dawn Staley enjoys influencing
people. She likes playing a positive role in the lives of her players and assists in preparing them for school, playing and working.

**Question 3: What do you like least about your job?**

Phyllis Mangina responded by stating that she is disappointed with the immaturity of the youth today. She feels that out of every four players recruited three are babies. She appreciates the eighteen year old that is mature, responsible, and discipline. Regina Miller discloses that dealing with the politics attached to the position is tough, but she acknowledges that this comes with the job. Cathy Parsons feels that it is difficult to go through the trying times. She faces challenges when dealing with crisis situations that impact her program. She believes that the most unpleasant thing to accept is that she has to deal with this misshapenness because having signed her name to the contract obligates her. Coach Parsons does accept the belief that the good and bad days she encounters immolates life. Wendy Larry is discouraged by the time commitment required in the profession. She feels that you cannot hold a strong relationship with family and friends throughout the year. Coach Staley finds recruiting to be tedious work. She expressed disappointment in sometimes not being able to enjoy the fruits of your labor. She affirmed, "You don’t always see the results of hard work...recruiting is like a crap shot...I like to gamble but I don’t like to waste time."

**Question 4: Do you believe that your salary is commensurate to the job you perform?**

The four head coaches took varying positions in responding to their feelings about their salaries. Phyllis Mangina doesn’t feel that her salary is where the market is and
states that she is not satisfied with her salary at the university. Coach Parsons believes that some days she is and others she is not happy with her pay. She insists, "Happiness is depending on happenings." But her final answer was yes, because she claims that most times she is fulfilled while others are trying. Coach Miller held firm on never, but she thinks that she does get paid a decent salary. Wendy Larry looked at this question from a different perspective. She believes that her salary is competitive but feels that it is nowhere near her male counterparts. In general, she is comfortable with her salary, feels she is making enough money, and is not wanting. She addressed the difference between public money and private money and discussed that compensation is based on variables like longevity, post-season appearances, winning records, player graduation rates, etc. Head coaches have the opportunity to supplement their salaries through incentive monies. Ultimately, Coach Larry feels that there is a significant difference between the salaries of men's basketball head coaches in comparison to women's basketball head coaches doing the same job. She adamantly expresses her discomfort with the disparity that exists between the genders in terms of pay. Dawn Staley confirms that she is not a money-crazed person and disclosed that she is happy. She reveals that money has never been an issue for her when dealing with basketball.

Question 5: Do you feel supported or pressured by your athletic director/administrators? Please explain.

Coach Larry believes that there is a really fine line between support and pressure at her university. She acknowledges that her institution places a lot of money and visibility on the sport of women's basketball. She claims that this is necessary for a small DI group 3 school to stay alive in a competitive field. She experiences external and internal
pressure and feels that it is important to have a little bit of a push from her and the administrators. She reveals that this behavior helps her to stay ahead of the game, and she credits her internal forces as motivators that keep her alive. Coach Miller states that she feels supported by the administration and admits to putting pressure on herself. She embraces the desire to pursue excellence and believes that striving for perfection has its positives and negatives. She does possess the ability to push through harder times because she prides herself on discipline, structure, and relentless work. On the other hand, Coach Parsons discloses that she does not feel pressured by her administrators, though she does admit to self-induced pressure. She revealed that she is in a situation where she has to cross her T’s and dot her I’s, because the university is on probation by the NCAA until 2004 and will be scrutinized. At her level she feels that she is not in a position where she has to win at all costs, but she states that she is personally committed to striving for success. Coach Staley feels really fortunate to have the support of all Athletic Directors and her Senior Women’s Administrator. She believes that the administrators are trying to help her to turn the program around. She states that what she asks for she gets. She is adamant about requesting only necessities...only the things needed to help the program to grow. Coach Staley believes that she and the administration have a shared vision for the program.

Leadership Style

Question 6: How would you describe your coaching style?

Coach Miller describes her coaching style as intense and states that she is passionate about what she does. She prides herself on being very goal oriented and extremely
focused. Her on-court coaching style is up-tempo and she aims to force her opponents to play this way. She likes to control the tempo of the ballgame on both offense and defense. Coach Mangina feels that her style has changed over the years. She reveals that she listens more now than she had in the past. She is more comfortable with not knowing everything and believes that she is receptive to others opinions when making decisions. She embraces all-hands on approach, but claims that she is not a micro manager. She expects her staff to do their job—for example “here it is do it”. She also practices an open door policy with her players and she takes the time to explain situations to them. Coach Parsons commits to helping her players to understand the game and to be accountable for their actions and behaviors. She operates under the following terms with her players...to every stimulus there is a response and she feels that it is important to be proactive. She discloses that she displays an extremely aggressive coaching style. She wants to jump on her opponents with a fast tempo in your face defense and transition offense. She reveals that there are good and bad points to this style. How you deal with officials is also very important. Coach Parsons would also like to build more patience in her players to encourage them to execute more effectively in a half court set. Coach Larry states that her coaching style is very structured and disciplined, but she has changed a little overtime. She believes that it is essential for the head coach to establish and maintain a rapport with a team leader. She feels that this relationship helps her to stay in the know with her team and is crucial to success. Coach Staley describes her coaching style as very intense, a warrior. She proclaims, “I gather my troops and get them to believe that they can compete and win against any opponent.”
Question 7: Describe your personality type. Are you an authoritarian or democratic?

Coach Parsons is a self-proclaimed authoritarian. She states that “there is no room for democracy in sports, rather theocracy...she rules”. She is adamant about having only one ruler during the games, but allows her players to have a voice in game preparation. She states that it is important for her players to have a listening voice and she encourages them to think on their feet in games. Regina Miller states that her style is that of an authoritarian, but she believes that on occasions she can be a little democratic as well. She feels that it is important for her to be empathetic and often tries to put self in others position. Coach Miller expressed things don’t always go her way, but she is always willing to take the lead. Wendy Larry admits to being a little of both personality types, but she does have strong feelings about the way she wants things done. She revealed that she believes in her assistants. Coach Larry likes to hire assistants that are smarter than she is...people with differing opinions who are able to stand strong. During her earlier coaching years she was an authoritarian and as she ages she has adapted to a more democratic style. Phyllis Mangina embraces a democratic personality style. She likes to let her assistants have opinions about various situations and encourages them to have ownership. She states that her personality is not easy going and defines herself as rather stubborn. Coach Mangina feels that she is currently calmer than she used to be...more even keeled now. Dawn Staley believes she is democratic and feels that she is fair at the end of the day. She likes to assess situations and stated that, “I am not malicious in my thoughts and decisions...no matter who it hurts or helps...it is for the best of the program.”
Question 8: Please describe your relationship with your assistant coaches.

Regina Miller describes her relationship with her assistants as very good. She reveals that they are respectful and loyal towards one another. Coach Mangina maintains a business relationship with her assistants, which sometimes touches on personal. Overall she feels that there is a good level of trust and caring shared amongst them. Wendy Larry believes that she has a great rapport with her staff. She sees these relationships as a plus in the profession. Coach Larry discloses that her staff is her coworkers and friends and they share a mutual respect. She feels that this behavior helps the whole team concept to work come over into the team. Coach Parsons admits that she and her staff are friends first. She is committed to helping them to understand things that happen in their lives. Trust is the key element shared in their relationships. She looks for balance in tough situations and encourages open lines of communication with her staff. She states that she sincerely cares about them and their futures. Coach Staley admits that two out of three of her assistants she has had prior personal and professional relationships with. She is very cautious about friendships in this environment. She does not want to step on others toes and her goal is to eliminate division amongst her staff. Coach Staley stated that she likes to have fun, but keeps things professional.

Question 9: What kind of relationship do you have with your players?

Coach Miller expresses that she is a role model and mentor for her players. She states that she maintains a strong relationship with them and encourages them to engage in her open door policy. Coach Larry reveals that she gets along better with the leaders on her squad and believes that there is a pecking order in teams’ structure. She spends more
personal time with her leaders and she holds them responsible for informing her on what’s happening with the team. She also states that captains are different than leaders. She has weekly meetings with the leaders, which are usually held in a comfortable informal setting. Coach Larry believes that “kids are threatened by the office”. Coach Mangina divulged that the relationship varies from player to player. She states that “They know I care about them”. She talks to them and cares for them. She claims that she is not soft, but not an idiot to them either...though she believes that some may fear her. Coach Parsons feels that this is the hardest part of her job. She states that she would love to be a player’s coach, but if she pleases them they can’t win. She operates under the terms of “tough love”. Coach Staley believes that she relates to her players on different levels. She claims, “I am a coach between the lines, friends in the office, a mother when disciplining them, and a sister when giving them advice.” She explains that the relationship is reciprocal...one of give and take.

Question 10: How effective are your managerial and organizational skills?

Coach Mangina states that her skills are ok...she believes that she is pretty organized, but would like to increase accountability with timelines. She likes the way she manages her staff and expressed that trust is the key. She feels that she needs people who are willing to do the work...she doesn’t want to hold their hands. Coach Larry revealed that she always has been able to pass the buck through delegating responsibilities amongst her staff. She wants her staff to bring her results and believes that how they get it done may differ. Regina Miller attributes being open to discussion and communicating with her staff as the reasons why she is very effective in this area. Coach Parsons feels that this is
the weakest part of who she is as a head coach. She admitted needing a great administrative assistant to keep her covered and she needs to delegate tasks amongst her assistants. Dawn Staley states that she was inexperienced coming into the position. She has learned a lot over the past three years. She identifies communication to be her biggest challenge and wants to make changes in this area. She states, "I am a doer, a visionary. I do as I see things and I don't always explain things very well...I lead by example."

Question 11: How would you improve communication?

Coach Mangina feels she is more straightforward now...she wants to be more direct, but tactful and respectful without putting people on the defensive. She is concerned about coming across like a jerk. Regina Miller states that she would improve communication by asking for input from her staff and team...she wants to know what they are thinking. Coach Larry wants to be a little more honest and let people hear things straight up. She wishes that she could be a little more insensitive, because sometimes she is reserved and holds back. She admits that she doesn't want to hurt peoples feelings...she believes that "woman harbor bad feelings". Cathy Parsons improves communication by having one-on-one meetings with her staff and by clearly stating what her needs are. She likes to find out what is going on with her staff through conversation. She is not set on documentation; rather she focuses on cultivating and building her relationship with them. Coach Staley addresses issues relating to communication with her staff. She wants to be more observant and get to know the person better. She focuses on being a good listener and is able to apologize when she feels it is necessary.
Assistant Coach Criteria

Question 12: What qualities do you look for when hiring an assistant coach?

Wendy Larry looks for the following qualities in an assistant coach: self-starters, people with opinions, good work ethic...willing to put in the extra time, good social skills...individuals who can relate to people. Coach Miller requires persons who are loyal and assertive. Phyllis Mangina wants people she can trust. She explained the importance of the assistant being able to do their best job, have her back, and a sincere interest in the program. The selected individual must be a hard worker. Coach Mangina likes a person who is willing to go above and beyond, those that “work until the job is done”, and someone who is an efficient worker. Coach Parsons believes that it is important to hire people you have had prior relationships with, people who have your back, people who want to succeed, people who are completely loyal and trustworthy...even through tough times these individuals maintain their integrity and are steadfast. Loyalty is the main quality Dawn Staley looks for when hiring assistants. She has to feel that the coach has her back at all times. She also wants the individual to portray a passion for the game and young people. She expresses, “It can’t be just a job...it will get old after a while.” She feels that the coach has to have a genuine interest in the profession.

Question 13: How do you delegate job responsibilities to your assistant coaches?

Phyllis Mangina claims that she tries to give everybody a little bit of everything...for example, scouting opponents, recruiting, and player development. She likes to expose her assistants to every aspect of the program. She does this because if someone gets sick
or leaves to become a head coach the work can still get done. She relies on each member of her staff for different parts of the whole. Coach Miller delegates job responsibilities amongst her staff by basing her decisions on the assistants' strengths and experience. Coach Parsons focuses on necessity and propensity, she believes that "people do certain things well". Wendy Larry tries to find out her assistants strengths and spends time getting to know their personality types. She is a firm believer in staff retreat work, which she asserts enables her to learn more about her staff. She likes to identify her assistants' strengths and weaknesses. After assessing their weakness, she challenges her assistants to stretch their personal limitations through specifically delegating their job responsibilities. Dawn Staley just tells her staff what she needs them to do. She knows their strengths and gives them things to make them look good. She will delegate job responsibilities in direct relation to her assistant's strengths.

**Question 14: How do you encourage your assistant coaches to present their ideas in practices and games?**

Coach Miller encourages her assistants to share their ideas in staff meetings, informational sharing sessions, during breakdown drills in practice and timeouts during games. Coach Mangina likes to information share in meetings and admits to having an open door policy with her staff. She encourages them to say what they have to say and to share what is on their minds. She believes that the best assistant coaches do this despite rejection, tone, etc. Coach Larry states that she will just ask her assistants "what do you think...what is your opinion?" She believes that there is a time and place to discuss existing issues. She meets with her staff on a regular basis. In these meetings opinions are shared and at the conclusion the staff as a whole will come to a common answer to
the situation or problem at hand. Coach Parsons encourages her staff to give input during meetings and while scouting or watching game film. She has a young staff and feels that they have great ideas, but she wants them to see why we do certain things. She persuades her assistants to prove her or disprove her with their estimations. Coach Staley sees things in black and white and they have to be well thought out. She is the type of person that will ask her assistants’ a million questions pertaining to the subject. She needs to feel comfortable with the information and confident that it is something that can help the team. She welcomes input from her assistants. But she does hold them accountable for backing up their suggestions and requires them to educate her on the presented idea(s).

Question 15: Are you satisfied with the recruiting efforts of your assistant coaches? If yes, please tell why. If no, please discuss areas you would like to see improved.

Wendy Larry insists that she will not be satisfied with her staffs recruiting efforts until they get the “Top 5” players in the country always. She wonders how they can be more competitive. She also disclosed that she is competing against programs with bigger expense budgets, elaborate travel means, and competitive game schedules. Coach Parsons is faced with different concerns when it comes to recruiting. She states that her level is hard and admits to understanding the difficulty of selling her product…for example, conference vs. school. She knows that she is faced with budget restraints, but overall is pleased with her assistants’ qualities and relentlessness. Coach Mangina expressed that she is satisfied with her staffs recruiting efforts. She is adamant about handling players and parents accordingly. She is committed to playing by the rules, follows the NCAA guidelines, and doesn’t participate in negative recruiting.
Regina Miller feels that her assistants portray effective organizational skill, efficiently follow-up with and cultivate players, and succeed in selling her, the program and the university. Coach Staley is pretty satisfied with the recruits her staff has signed, but she feels that they could be more organized in their efforts. She believes that improving organizational skills will help to open up more options and enable them to eventually turn some folks away. She thinks that they do a good job in home visits, on the recruiting trails, and with correspondence. Ultimately, she expressed that they have all the ingredients to be successful.

Question 16: Do you trust your assistant coaches and believe they are committed to supporting you and your vision for the program?

Phyllis Mangina believes that her assistants have done a good job despite disagreements. She states that they all are on the same page after having group discussions. She disclosed that the staff supports her decisions in the end. Coach Miller feels that her staff has been very loyal and shown a commitment to the program and working hard. Coach Parsons revealed that she absolutely trusts her assistants and states that the reason she hired them in the first place. She believes that having had a prior relationship with her staff is key. Wendy Larry stated that she absolutely trusts her assistants. She feels that they are all in it for the same reasons...for the betterment of the program. She believes in thanking them publicly for their combined efforts. She also discussed her beliefs of handling things she did not like in private. Her approach is “when things are going well it is all about them not me.” Dawn Staley believes that her assistants support her vision for the program. She is aware that her assistants may have aspirations for bigger things in their futures. During the season, she expects that they
sacrifice their personal aspirations for the betterment of the team. She maintains that she and her staff are on the same page.

**Question 17:** Have you ever fired one of your assistant coaches? If yes, Please explain why. If no, give me three reasons why you would.

Regina Miller proclaims that the main reason she has parted ways with an assistant is a direct result of lack of loyalty. Phyllis Mangina has had to fire assistants in the past for the following reasons... displaying disloyalty to program, hanging out partying with players, failure to do their job, and being unprofessional. Coach Parsons has never had to fire one of her assistants. But she believes that disloyalty, NCAA rules violations, and lacking knowledge of the game would be adequate reasons for termination. Coach Larry also has yet to fire a member of her staff, though she does admit to discussing it being time for them to move on. For example, she has encouraged former assistants to grow and step out into head jobs. She believes that she would remove an assistant who was being disloyal, crossing player coach lines, and lacking in work performance. Coach Staley has yet to fire one of her assistants. She believes that she would dismiss a member of her staff if the person were selfish, disloyal, or unprofessional.

**Question 18:** How do you prepare your assistant coaches to one day become head coaches?

Coach Parsons prepares her assistants by giving them the responsibilities and tasks required to become a head coach. She gives them the opportunity to understand their visions and goals. She commits to being extremely supportive and is willing to educate them. Coach Larry likes to give her assistants diverse experiences. She gives them things they do not like to do to help them to improve their strengths as well as their
weaknesses. She is devoted to helping her assistants to develop their own coaching style. Coach Miller allows her assistants to give input, incorporate their ideas, participate in media relations, and on-court coaching. She teaches them by modeling for them and supporting them as they pursue their goals. Coach Mangina prepares her assistants for head coaching positions through her delegation of duties and having discussions in meetings. She talks to her staff about making decisions and explains why outcomes. She encourages learning the game by reading books, collecting tapes, attending clinics, and becoming familiar with varying coaching styles. She also encourages or discourages them in their search for existing job opportunities. She feels that it is key for assistants to network and build rapport with others in the profession. Coach Staley is unsure on how to prepare her assistants because she is new at this. She believes that she can prepare them to be fair and to take what is positive and not what they think is negative.

Question 19: What advice would you give to someone who is interested in becoming an assistant coach?

Regina Miller advises those interested in becoming an assistant coach to become students of the game. She suggests that they start at the entry level and get involved as a volunteer. She feels it is important to be around the game and learn it from a different perspective than when they were a player. She also encourages networking with persons in the coaching field. Phyllis Mangina states that the individual should talk to other assistants at the DI, DII, and DIII levels to get a feel of what it is like, how much work is involved, and the amount of hours required. She also promotes getting involved in the WBCA and joining the affiliation. She believes that it is pertinent for individuals to gain coaching experience as a volunteer, graduate assistant, etc. She eagerly states that people
have to want to get into coaching for the love of sports and kids...“Coaches work more hours than money paid.” Cathy Parsons advises these persons to count the cost, because your way of life will drastically change. She persuades individuals to understand what the job entails and to note that they will be living outside the norm (9am-5pm). She recommends getting involved of the lives of young people, gaining knowledge of the job responsibilities, and preparing to work hard and commit oneself. Wendy Larry echoes the idea of looking inside you and understanding the commitment over the long term. She wished to inform those interested that though the position looks glamorous and receives lots of exposure the workload is heavy. She believes that it is important to display accountability to academics and commit to the life style of a successful coach. She also disclosed that she feels coaching is a non-ending process and that there is never a down time. Coach Staley advises the future assistant to be willing to do anything...to be selfless. She wishes to ensure them to have the programs best interest in mind. She recommends adopting the following qualities, “be hungry, act like a sponge, be resilient, outwork everybody else, be organized.”

**Conclusion**

These interview questions reveal that head coaches select assistants who they believe will support them in the way in which they choose to run their program. Head coaches want individuals who are committed to the program, driven, intelligent, knowledgeable and confident. Selected assistants must display excellent verbal and written communication skills. It is also essential for them to enjoy meeting new people, networking and building a list of professional contacts. The head coaches’ expectations
of assistant coaches are exerting loyalty, assertiveness, and professionalism at all times. Trust plays a major role in the existing relationship between the head coach and his or her assistants. An Assistant's vigorous work ethic and job performance helps to ensure employment, promotions, raises and opportunities to excel within the profession.
Chapter V

Future Shock

The Changing Face of the Student Athlete

Many people can recall a time when female athletes were labeled tomboys, gym rats, hoopers, and ballers. At many universities across the country, women's basketball players could be seen working on their games daily. They would head to the courts looking for intense competition and often participated in pick-up games with the guys. It was important for them to prove that they were as strong, as fast, and as talented as their male counterparts. They weren't afraid to sweat, engage in physical play, and show passion for the game they loved. Their priorities were as follows: books, basketball, family, and friends. Players socialized and dated when their demanding schedules allowed them some free time. Commitment to excelling in the classroom and on the basketball court was the shared goal of teammates.

Over the years, this attitude and behavior has changed. "Today's student-athletes deal with many issues, including maintaining the balance between academics and athletics, reaching their potential athletically, meeting all academic requirements, maintaining a well-rounded personal life and developing a set of values and skills that will benefit them." (Tinsley, 1999) Players have become extremely self-centered, less committed, focused, loyal and disciplined. Many players today choose to transfer from one school to another simply because they are unsatisfied with their playing time or due to perceived personality conflicts with coaches and teammates. They refuse to put in extra time in the gym, weight room, and track to earn and compete for the opportunity to play. Many will sulk, complain, point fingers, and make excuses for not devoting time to
improve their skill level. They begin to take their scholarship for granted and act as if someone owes them something for nothing. They think about themselves first and then may consider the needs of the team. Some young ladies still embrace the old school mentality, but many have conformed to the "I got to do me" mindset.

Assistants Relating to Players

The relationship that exists between an assistant coach and a player is of extreme importance. Effective assistant coaches guide, support, instruct and encourage their players to be their best. They often serve in the capacity of counselor or mentor and help in their players' maturation process. They hold meetings with players throughout the year to discuss their academic progress, athletic performance, family lives, interpersonal relationships, problems and concerns. Players tend to confide in their assistant coaches much more than they do their head coach.

It is pertinent for assistants to remain professional with players at all times. It is dangerous for assistants to befriend players and cross the player-coach line. There is zero tolerance in the coaching profession for assistants who hang out with, party with, or engage in intimate relationships with players. Assistants must know that it is unethical to cross these boundaries and fraternize with members of their team. Onlookers view this behavior poorly and often suggest that the assistant be removed from the program.

Players will sometimes disclose serious situations or occurrences to their assistant coaches. These circumstances can include drug use, sexual abuse, pregnancy, fighting, arrests, stealing, cutting class etc. Knowledge of this information requires assistants to take action and work towards solutions to the proposed problem. Material that is
confidential in nature and can negatively impact the team should be documented and shared with the head coach. It is important for assistants to understand that though their opinions are important ...the head coach is the boss and their role is to assist this person.

Five Ways to Succeed as an Assistant Coach

1. **Loyalty** – Head coaches want to be able to depend on their assistants. They need to feel that you are fully committed and share in their overall vision for the program. It is important for you to ensure them of your support and prove that you have their back during good times and challenging ones too.

2. **Trustworthy** – Head coaches enjoy working with persons they feel they can trust. They wish to trust you as a person, your work ethic, and opinions relating to the decisions made within the program. They also expect for you to be able to keep the programs confidential issues and personal matters in-house. Integrity is the key here.

3. **Assertiveness** – Head coaches like assistants who are self-sufficient, confident, and knowledgeable. They respect assistants who are willing to express their opinions with supporting facts. Proposing differing views on a given topic or assignment shows initiative and a commitment to excellence. Assistants that promote new ideas and implement innovative ways to accomplish tasks are extremely resourceful.

4. **Good Work Ethic** – Individuals willing to work until the job is done and then find something else to do excel in this field. Assistants that devote extra time watching game film, scouting opponents, recruiting, and developing players will likely succeed. These persons are efficient, reliable workers who take pride in being able to multi-task. These assistants enjoy learning knew material and aim to surpass set goals.
5. **Efficient Social Skills** - Being able to relate to people from all races, creeds, and socio-economic backgrounds is a must. Assistants must be able to express themselves both verbally and written. Outgoing, personable, and persuasive are the necessary personality traits to display. First impressions are lasting and you only get one opportunity to obtain the interest of recruits and their supporting cast. Non-verbal communication is just as important as the words, which are spoken. Extending a firm handshake, while maintaining eye contact, and a smile can leave a positive impression on the receiver. You must appear confident, convincing, and passionate about the university and program you are representing. Assistants are similar to salespersons, whereas interpersonal communication skills help to close deals.

**Five Ways to Fail as an Assistant Coach**

1. **Disloyalty** – If the head coach believes that you can’t be trusted then your time spent with him or her will be short lived. Assistants who engage in harmful alignments with players and administrators will be exposed as disloyal insubordinates. It is detrimental for your career to challenge the head coach openly in front of the players or their superiors. Once you have evoked ill feelings in the head coach, you can be certain that the working relationship will suffer and eventually subside.

2. **Unethical/Unprofessional** – Lying, cheating, and stealing are viewed as negative in our society and in the coaching. Engaging in academic fraud and scandalous behavior are grounds for dismissal. Coaches who get caught risk destroying the reputation of the university, the teams, and theirs. Also, those assistants who
believe that it is ok to prey on the impressionable youth should be removed and banned from working with these young ladies.

3. **Poor Work Performance** – Assistants make a decent living in exchange for coaching their student athletes. Neglecting to satisfy job responsibilities can result from the following behaviors: non-compliance, laziness, poor attitude, and meager time management or organizational skills. Assistants have an obligation to fulfill their role on the team. Failure to complete tasks, continued lateness, and plentiful excuses are poor habits to exhibit. A coaching staff is equivalent to a mini team and individuals who are self-serving and belligerent are undesirable.

4. **Violate NCAA Rules** – Coaches who constantly disregard the rules in place to ensure a level playing field will often suffer the consequences. Everyone wishes to gain an edge with a *prime* recruit…but deceiving the governing system is not the way to achieve this advantage. Providing a prospect or her family with money, athletic apparel, or making contacts outside the designated contact periods can result in termination. Assistants are required to pass an annual test to obtain NCAA certification. Therefore, there is no excuse for failure to utilize the NCAA Rules and Guidelines Manual and their athletic department’s compliance officer.

5. **Undisciplined Behavior** – Assistants who present as loud, obnoxious, cocky, and immature will inevitably founder. Those that fabricate stories amongst their peers, overexert themselves socially (drinking/partying while on road), and use extensive profanity tend to negatively impact the existing coaching image. Individuals who fail to proofread their work and make the necessary corrections before sending correspondences out of the office to recruits won’t last. If an
assistant is caught up in “I” or “Me” instead of “We” they are destined to fall short. This person must understand that no one person is bigger than the program. Careless, unfocused, and lackadaisical behavior can become infectious and should be exterminated before it contaminates the team.

Table 5.1 ■ Gender and Race Statistics in Division I Women’s Basketball

Division I women’s basketball players are from all walks of life. Persons who are open to accepting different cultures and lifestyles should coach this diverse group. Today’s student athletes are from inner cities, suburbs, rural areas, and even from overseas. An assistant coach must practice patience when trying to instruct players. It is the coach’s responsibility to become familiar with the athlete’s personality, upbringing, and family life. This should take place during the recruiting process and continue while players are in school. Coaches that maintain open lines of communication with players can contribute to the overall success of the program.
It is likely that players will experience homesickness, stress, heartache, and disappointment at some point in their college careers. These situations are tough on the player and often adversely affect their performance and behavior towards the entire team. Skilled assistants will take time to help the player to resolve the situation. Holding one-on-one meetings, suggesting counseling, or lending support by giving a simple hug, can do this. Assistants should be well versed in active listening skills...often players' just need someone to talk to. Assistants who succeed at this task will gain the respect and trust of their players.

Table 5.2: Analysis of Employed Division I Assistant Coaches

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<th>2001-02 Division I Assistant Coaches Percentages</th>
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<td>White Women</td>
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<td>Black Men</td>
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<td>Black Women</td>
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<td>Other Minority Men</td>
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<td>Other Minority Women</td>
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There are a total of 794 available Division I assistant coaching jobs. White women (345) are the target group in the assistant coaching profession. These women are more likely to secure employment than black women (206). Black women assistants represent the second largest population, but are closely followed by white men (171) who
are third on the list. Black Men (34) are a few steps from being unemployed. Whereas, other minorities figures for men (6) and women (12) are close to being declared extinct. Please note that discrimination does exist in the profession.

These hiring practices are deemed unethical and unlawful yet they continue. Many head coaches have the power and backing from administration to hire their staff. They have the freedom to choose whom they would like to work with, despite considering the individual’s race and gender. Most head coaches will hire people they have pre-existing relationships with. Therefore, it is essential for assistants to network and build relationships with others in the profession. In most cases getting the job is based on whom you know in addition to what you know.

Table 5.3: Examination of Employed Division I Head Coaches

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<tr>
<th>2001-02 Division I Head Coaches Percentages</th>
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<td>■ Other Minority Women</td>
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The author believes that assistants should be familiar with the population of their superiors. Research shows that Division I women’s basketball head coaching positions
are normally dominated by white women (161). White men (80) are the next in line to receive these employment opportunities. Black women (39) are more likely to head mid to low level institutions and are likely to be selected for predominately black schools. Since the inception of the WNBA, there has been an influx of pro players being awarded assistant and head coaching positions, even without having prior coaching experience. Politics plays a huge role in the hiring practices at the division I level. Other minority men (3) and women (2) are the least likely to be selected to run a division I program. Organizations such as the Black Coaches Association (BCA) and Women’s Basketball Coaching Association (WBCA) are strategizing ways to diversify the field. These statistics reveal that disparity does exist in the college women’s basketball head coaches’ selection process. Succeeding as an Assistant coach can lead to advancement in your career. Assistants’ desiring to become Division I head coaches should focus on the following topic areas: Leadership, communication, coaching, and education.
Chapter VI
SUMMARY

Table 6.1 = Four Components of Successful Division I Assistants

Leadership includes any behavior that influences, guides, directs, or controls a group. In this case, please note that the identified group consists of members of the team and women’s basketball staff. Effective assistants lead by example both on and off the basketball court. These individuals have the ability to persuade, inspire, and motivate others to join them in accomplishing set goals. Leadership styles do vary in the profession. Some coaches operate behind the scenes in private quarters, while others will take the initiative out in the open. Assistants who are accountable, reliable, trustworthy, innovative and professional possess the qualities needed to lead.

Communication is not just the act of speaking or being spoken to. It is being able to present your thoughts and ideas in verbal and written fashion. It is important to understand the received information and process it. Nonverbal communication such as
active listening, tracking, and using gestures are effective communication skills utilized by assistant coaches. These individuals are expected to be able to communicate with persons from all walks of life. Having knowledge of a person’s culture and beliefs will help assistants effectively communicate their messages. Messages that are well organized and clearly stated are more likely to be accepted. Assistants must be able to give players clear concise instructions during practices and games.

Coaching is any and all experience gained pertaining to the sport of women’s basketball. This experience comes from being a fan of the game, a volunteer, or even a former player. This person has spent numerous hours watching games and knows the rules. A coach is an instructor...someone who has the ability to cultivate players and helps to manage team dynamics. This person is a disciplinarian, a teacher, and a supporter. Becoming a good coach takes practice, dedication, and hard work. The different levels of on-court coaching positions are as follows: graduate assistant, third assistant, second assistant, first assistant, associate head coach, and head coach. The more experience an assistant gains the better his or her chances are for advancement in the profession. Coaching also includes recruiting, scouting, counseling players, media relations, and participating in community service activities.

Education is what separates a coach from his or her players. Many assistants at the division I level have earned masters degrees. They are students of the game and spend lots of time reading books, periodicals, and visiting websites. Assistants watch numerous amounts of game film and often observe diverse coaching styles and philosophies. Material is also available on coaching techniques, practice and conditioning drills. Assistants can learn from observing the head coach’s style and
decision-making process. It is important for assistants to remain current with the existing

trends in the profession. For example, today’s technology advancements have forced

assistants to become computer literate. Whereas, several years ago assistants were able
to complete tasks through written letters and phone calls. Everyday assistants have the

opportunity to gain useful information.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Assistant coaches do play a major role in the success or failure of the university’s

women’s basketball program. Normally, if the assistants are successful at their job than
the program will benefit. In this case, the head coach will experience less stress given

that sufficient assistants support them. The players’ needs are met, tasks are completed
in a timely manner, and conflicts are resolved proficiently. These assistants are

motivated and committed to the success of the program. They also take pride in bettering
themselves by working diligently to be the best.

In contrast, assistants who are undisciplined, unfocused, and indolent will

contribute to the overall demise of the team. Assistants who display uncommitted,
disloyal, and unprofessional behavior will tend to negatively impact the program. These
individuals will give excuses for poor work performance, fail to complete assignments,
and inadequately represent the program in public. Head coaches are generally

responsible for their staff and will pay the consequences for hiring mediocre individuals.
The consequences can result in the assistant(s) being fired and in some cases the removal
of the head coach.
Assistants should be aware that they are expendable and that they are employed in unstable positions. Their future fate lies in the hands of there superiors. Therefore, they are at the mercy of the head coach at all times. Having a good working relationship with the head coach is the key to maintaining job security. The following quote can help the reader in understanding the responsibilities of a credible head coach. “You as a coach play a critical role in helping the team arrive at a common goal, monitoring and maintaining your players commitment, assigning and appreciating roles, communicating with the team, keeping conflict under control, and promoting your team’s chemistry and cohesion. The team must have a leader who they believe in and has the skills necessary to get the most from the team. A credible coach creates an effective environment that allows the team to perform to its full potential.” (Jansen, 1999) Assistants play an active part in the head coach being able to achieve these goals.

Though the assistant coaching position may appear glamorous to onlookers, the truth is it is extremely time consuming and competitive. Many assistants are supplied with university vehicles, cell phones, laptops, and even corporate credit cards. But these items are not used for leisure; they are utilized to conduct business. Assistants spend numerous hours traveling and corresponding with recruits, their families, and coaches. They do not have the option of leaving the office and not taking work home. They do not have set work schedules and there is no such thing as down time. The position demands individuals who are motivated, creative, and dedicated. The turnover rates are extremely high during the spring and summer months. “The names and faces change every year, but the hype, hysteria, and overkill are constant. The recruiting of basketball players is particularly cutthroat because a single star can transform a mediocre basketball team into
a contender." (McMillen & Coggins, 1992) It is important to note that an assistant's livelihood is directly linked to the decision of a 17 or 18-year-old teenager.

Assistants are under a great deal of pressure to succeed. They experience stress from several sources: For example, from the head coach, self-inflicted, and from peers. There are ways to minimize this stress and ensure satisfactory job performances. Therefore, the author wishes to provide current assistants and expectant assistants with the succeeding recommendations:

**Keys to Succeeding as an Assistant Coach**

1. Effectively manage your time
2. Network with others in the profession
3. Build effective relationships with coaches & players
4. Select and consult a experienced mentor
5. Display good communication & people skills
6. Exert professionalism & teamwork
7. Play by the NCAA rules & guidelines
8. Know your X's and O's & teach players
9. Attend professional clinics & conventions
10. Be personable, confident, & resourceful

The information and research, which appears throughout this dissertation, can serve as a valuable resource for assistant coaches in the profession and those aspiring employment. Media coverage, fan support, and collegiate women's basketball coaching
salaries are on the rise. The following comment was made in reference to Carolyn Peck's six-year deal worth more than $2 million dollars. "It made a statement," said legendary Tennessee coach Pat Summit. "Now they expect the program to be successful and obviously plan to up their commitment in marketing. I love it." There are endless possibilities for assistants who are helping to shape winning programs. The skills acquired today will open the doors of tomorrow. Preparation is the key!
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Appendix A

Survey
Master's Thesis Survey

The job of an assistant coach encompasses a wide range of responsibilities, for example, recruiting, scouting, on-court coaching, and counseling players. It is also expected that person participate in camps, clinics, and community service events.

This survey is part of a Master's Thesis Project, which seeks to discover if assistant coaches are receiving the necessary job training and supervision in order for them to be successful. It is also aimed at revealing if the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of an assistant coach can result in the success or failure of the university’s women’s basketball program.

The responses to this survey will be kept confidential and anonymous. After the results are calculated, the responses will be destroyed.

Results to this survey will be used to develop an “Assistant Coaches’ Guide to Success Handbook.” Thank you for your time and participation in this survey. If you should have any questions please feel free to contact me.

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PART I: SURVEY QUESTIONS

Please circle the answer that best describes your feelings regarding the statements below. For each statement, choose “SA” for Strongly Agree; “A” for Agree; “N” for Neutral; “D” for Disagree; or “SD” for Strongly Disagree.

1) I feel that I was adequately trained for my position as an Assistant Coach.
   A. SA    B. A    C. N    D. D    E. SD

2) I have a healthy professional working relationship with the Head Coach.
   A. SA    B. A    C. N    D. D    E. SD

3) The Head Coach values my opinion in regards to the operations of our women’s basketball program.
   A. SA    B. A    C. N    D. D    E. SD

4) The Head Coach and I openly communicate on issues relating to the program.
   A. SA    B. A    C. N    D. D    E. SD
5) I have the same coaching philosophy and style as the Head Coach.
   A. SA   B. A   C. N   D. D   E. SD

6) I know what the Head Coach wants for the program in terms of recruiting prospective
   student-athletes.
   A. SA   B. A   C. N   D. D   E. SD

7) Considering player-coach relationships, I am comfortable with the way the players are
   treated within our program.
   A. SA   B. A   C. N   D. D   E. SD

8) I have a clear understanding of all the NCAA Rules and Bylaws.
   A. SA   B. A   C. N   D. D   E. SD

9) I am allowed to utilize my accrued vacation and sick days.
   A. SA   B. A   C. N   D. D   E. SD

10) I feel that my current salary is sufficient for the job I perform as an Assistant Coach.
    A. SA   B. A   C. N   D. D   E. SD

Please feel free to make additional comments/suggestions:

PART II: GENERAL INFORMATION
Please answer the questions below. (Circle One)

Age:
A. 21-25   B. 26-30   C. 31-35   D. 36-40   E. 41-45   F. 46+

Gender:
A. Male   B. Female

Affiliation:
A. NCAA I   B. NCAA II   C. NCAA III   D. NAIA II   E. JC/CC   F. Other

How many years have you been an Assistant Coach?
A. 1-3   B. 4-6   C. 7-9   D. 10-12   E. 12-14   F. 15+

Which assistant coach position do you currently hold?
A. 1st   B. 2nd   C. 3rd   D. Graduate   E. Volunteer   F. Other

Would you be interested in receiving an “Assistant Coaches Guide to Success
Handbook?”
A. Yes   B. No
Appendix B

Interview Questions
Women’s College Basketball Head Coach Interview Questions

I. Background Information

1. How long have you been a Head Women’s Basketball Coach?

2. What do you like most about your job?

3. What do you like least about your job?

4. Do you believe that your salary is commensurate to the job you perform?

5. Do you feel supported or pressured by your athletic director/administrators? Please explain.

II. Leadership Style

6. How would you describe your coaching style?

7. Describe your personality type. Are you an authoritarian or democratic?

8. Please describe your relationship with your assistant coaches.

9. What kind of relationship do you have with your players?

10. How effective are your managerial and organizational skills?

11. How would you improve communication?

III. Assistant Coach Criteria

12. What qualities do you look for when hiring an assistant coach?

13. How do you delegate job responsibilities to your assistant coaches?

14. How do you encourage your assistant coaches to present their ideas in practices and games?

15. Are you satisfied with the recruiting efforts of your assistant coaches? If yes, please tell why. If no, please discuss areas you would like to see improved.

16. Do you trust your assistant coaches and believe they are committed to supporting you and your vision for the program?
17. Have you ever fired one of your assistant coaches? If yes, please explain why. If no, give me three reasons why you would.

18. How do you prepare your assistant coaches to one day become head coaches?

19. What advice would you give to someone who is interested in becoming an assistant coach?