

One Word That Will Change Your Team

Ready:

"Without revelation people run wild." – Proverbs 29:18 (HCSB)

Set

What if there was one thing would improve your team in incredible ways? What if One Word could mean the difference between failure and victory? It's time to focus and motivate your team with just One Word.

At the beginning of every season, thousands of coaches, athletes and teams gather to discuss their goals. Goals and plans are passionately shared and written down with anticipation and excitement. It's an experience filled with energy, hope and optimism.

The problem is that after a few (or numerous) defeats, the positive energy and optimism felt at the beginning of the season has given way to the trials and challenges of reality. The goals that were shared and written down with such passion and enthusiasm are likely in the garbage can, and you find yourself simply trying to survive the season.

The problem is we focus on the results rather than the process. We develop "Do" goals instead of "Be" goals. If every single team defines success and sets the bar at winning the championship, then every team but one will have a season that ends in failure. Many times, we can't control the result. But we can control our effort, attitude and approach every single time. So before you start listing your long list of goals and developing complex plans for your team, it is time to get *One Word* for your team and let it be a driving force that provides focus and clarity.

Get a God-word, not just a good-word!

When I share the One Word concept with sports teams, I ask each player and coach to reflect upon and identify a single word that will serve as a driving force in their life and in their sport. I suggest they take some time to discover the word that is meant for them this year. The goal is to get a God-word not just a good-word.

This One Word vision is something we must receive from God. If it is, we will remain focused and committed and take responsibility for our role on the team. If not, we will become easily distracted, selfish, blame others, and make excuses when things don't go as planned.

I then encourage coaches to gather their teams and have each person share their word and why they chose it. The reason and meaning behind a word is what gives the word purpose and power.

I have shared this concept with coaches, athletes, teams, schools and athletic programs. The

stories and results from teams that have implemented this simple, powerful idea have been extraordinary.

The Atlanta Falcons discovered their words before the season this year and went on to have one of the best records in the NFL. Their head coach's word was *Finish* because he wanted the team to finish strong in everything they did.

Mark Richt, head football coach at the University of Georgia, had each player discover and share his word for the year. Players listed their words on big-screen televisions around the football facility to remind them to live their word.

One Word for One Season for One Team.

In addition to having each athlete on your team come up with his or her individual word, you can also choose a One Word focus for your entire team. One Word for the team can become a unifying force for players, as their commitment and loyalty to each other grows through the season. The word can give the team focus to center around and a constant reminder of what is expected from each member of the team.

Gettysburg College lacrosse team and Murray State softball team discovered their team's One Word, and each player wrote down their word and put it on their locker room wall as a constant reminder throughout the season. Jacksonville University discovered their team word, *Family*, and each player wrote their word on the ball. University of Central Florida did a painting of all their team's One Words.

One Word helps coaches, athletes, and teams generate clarity, focus, power and passion. While goals are easily forgotten, One Word sticks and inspires athletes to perform at a higher level.

Does this mean we shouldn't develop goals and plans anymore? Of course not. Coaches and athletes should continue to share goals and plans at the start of every season.

Real motivation is driven by a passion and purpose to play great, grow and make a difference. Coaches can help motivate and inspire their athletes to excel by helping them discover the One Word that will remind them of their purpose, maintain daily focus and keep their passion alive throughout the season.

So this season, at your kick-off meeting, do what everyone does and share your goals and plans, but also do something different. Encourage your team to discover their One Word that will drive them to play harder, care deeply, focus more and accomplish surpass your goals and plans.

Go

1. How can you implement One Word into your team?
2. What are ways that you can make this exercise memorable for your team?
3. How can One Word develop team unity?

Workout

- Romans 15:5-7
- Ephesians 4:15-16

Overtime

"Lord, I pray that You can use this concept to bring passion and power to our team. Use me to bring this to my team so they can benefit from this exercise. In Jesus' name, amen."

Bible Reference:

Ephesians 4



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