

## **influence**

n/a

### **Ready:**

“Therefore, whatever you want others to do for you, do also the same for them.” — Matthew 7:12

### **Set**

As coaches, we have the opportunity to exert a powerful influence on the young people we coach. This influence is partly related to our coaching style and personalities. It is also related to the role we play in the lives of student athletes. We determine whether or not a young person will make the team and be a significant contributor.

We have all witnessed “in your face” coaches whose intensity rises to the level of demeaning individual athletes. The “in your face” style works on occasion if it’s used to challenge young athletes to improve their skills. However, when it is carried to extremes, it causes much more harm than good. No one wants to be humiliated by someone they respect and who determines their success on the team.

I had some excellent coaches in both high school and college, coaches who cared about the individual athletes. They wanted to win, but they maintained a healthy perspective. My high school hockey coach, Bernie, was a tremendous man, someone we all admired and who was a positive influence in our lives. He became a friend, mentor, confidante, and role model for my teammates and me. Bernie passed away, and at the end of his funeral service people were invited to come forward to share thoughts and memories about him. This was a very meaningful exercise that reinforced the magnitude of his impact on our lives. The last person to approach the microphone suggested that we give Bernie a standing ovation for all he had done. So we did!

### **Go**

1. What is your coaching style?
2. Do you encourage your athletes, especially during the tough times?
3. How can you be more affirming?

### **Workout**

Extra Reading: Matthew 5:16; 22:37–39; 2 Thessalonians 3:13; 1 John 4:19

### **Overtime**

Lord, please help me to be a positive and caring influence on the young people with whom

You have entrusted me. Empower me, Father, to love as Jesus loved. Amen.



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