

EFS SERVANT LEADERSHIP NEWSLETTER

“Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are.” - John Wooden

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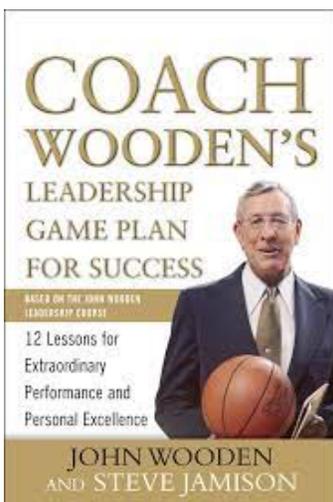
**TOPIC THIS ISSUE:
Leadership Wisdom
from John Wooden**

NEWSLETTER



THE WESTWOOD WAY: LEADERSHIP LESSONS OF JOHN WOODEN

By: Steven Matthew Leonard



For the past 19 years, I've kept a faded page from an old copy of Sports Illustrated in my top desk drawer. The edges are frayed, but the creases of the folds are as tight as the day I tore it from the last page of the magazine. It's rare that a story captures my attention so much, but this particular article did so in a way that few others have. The article is titled, "A Paragon Rising above the Madness," from sports journalist Rick Reilly's column, "The Life of Reilly." The subject of the piece is the late UCLA

basketball coach, John Wooden; the focus of the story, however, is character, leadership, and commitment. It's a story that will cause you to pause and consider your priorities in life and to re-evaluate what really matters.

I grew up during the heyday of UCLA basketball. I'm too young to remember each of the ten NCAA championships the Bruins won between 1964 and 1975, but old enough to recall seeing them win 88 straight games between 1971 and 1974. Some of the greatest names in basketball took to the court during those years, but through it all, John Wooden paced court-side, calmly leading his teams to victory after victory. As Reilly noted with sincerity, "There's never been a finer man in American sports than John Wooden, or a finer coach."

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As I grew older and pursued a military career, the leadership lessons of John Wooden framed much of my thinking.

His **pyramid of success** served as a model for building successful teams; his 12 lessons in leadership a paradigm for leading those teams. There was nothing particularly complicated about those lessons. They were simple, focused, and remarkably effective. When John Wooden died in 2010 at the age of 99, we lost an incredible coach, teacher, and mentor, but we didn't lose the leader. The legacy of John Wooden lives on to this day – through this philosophy, through his players, and through his lessons.

1. GOOD VALUES ATTRACT GOOD PEOPLE.

Values are the lifeblood of an organization. Live your values. Be the exemplar others can follow, and good people will be drawn to you.

2. USE THE MOST POWERFUL FOUR-LETTER WORD. LOVE.

Treat your people as if they are a part of your own family, because they are. Care for them, watch out for them, show them the tough love they need to succeed.

3. CALL YOURSELF A TEACHER.

As a leader, one of your most sacred duties is to help your people reach their full potential. That means committing the time and effort required for them to be all they can be. A great leader is a lifelong teacher, coach, and mentor.

4. EMOTION IS YOUR ENEMY.

A true leader knows how and when to wield emotion but is never captive to them. A leader who cannot control their emotions is volatile and unpredictable, and that is someone others will not want to follow.

5. IT TAKES TEN HANDS TO SCORE A BASKET.

As a company commander, my unit motto was, "We Go Farther Together." Success is a team sport, and it takes everyone on the team to win. The best leaders find a role for everyone and together they achieve heights that individuals only hope to gain.

6. LITTLE THINGS MAKE BIG THINGS HAPPEN.

Have a vision, set a path. But, pay close attention to the little things, because in the end they will accumulate and make the big things possible.

7. MAKE EACH DAY YOUR MASTERPIECE.

Mother Teresa is credited as saying, "Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We have only today." Don't allow a day to slip by without making the most of every opportunity presented. Give every day your best effort and walk away knowing that you gave it



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your all.

8. THE CARROT IS MIGHTIER THAN THE STICK.

A central tenet of leadership is motivation, and positive motivation will do more to drive success than fear. Use criticism as teaching tool and provide praise when it's earned; when punishment is necessary, don't confuse cruelty for effectiveness.

9. MAKE GREATNESS AVAILABLE TO EVERYONE.

As a leader, your legacy is measured in the success of your followers. You might not remember the name, Fox Conner, but you will never forget his proteges: Eisenhower, Marshall, and Bradley. Few of us will be fortunate enough to mold such successful leaders, but that should always be our goal.

10. SEEK SIGNIFICANT CHANGE.

Never settle for the status quo. Never measure yourself against someone else or another organization. If you truly want to be the very best leader you can be for your team, then you need to set the bar high and push them to greatness.

11. DON'T LOOK AT THE SCOREBOARD.

Leadership is a marathon, not a sprint. Define success then work toward it. Focus your effort on achieving it and know which "little things" matter.

12. ADVERSITY IS YOUR ASSET.

Adversity makes us stronger. It helps us to grow. It's also uncomfortable and may lead to failure. Embrace the adversity that builds character and ability and resist the temptation to blame the failure on others.

Today, John Wooden might seem like a man out of time. His lessons focused on humility, empathy, and compassion. He would remind his players that they had to earn the right to be proud and confident. He was famous for saying, "Discipline yourself, and others won't need to." In many ways, values came before anything else, what Reilly called his "Jimmy Stewart morals." That's the kind of leader we should all aspire to be.



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WHY JOHN WOODEN'S TEAM WON

By: John C. Maxwell



My lesson today centers on a man who, in my opinion, was the best basketball coach—college or pro—to have ever lived: the great John Wooden. To most he was known as the “Wizard of Westwood,” the UCLA basketball coach who guided the Bruins to an

unprecedented 10 national championships over two decades. But for those who played for him, he was much more than a coach. He was a teacher, father figure, mentor and master motivator who got every inch and more out of his players.

When I heard of his passing, my mind was flooded with many memories of this great man, and the impact he had on so many people, including me. I was also reminded of memories and life lessons I shared with him personally.

I spent some time with Coach Wooden a few years ago at his modest home in Los Angeles, where he lived for more than 30 years. It would have taken several hours just to read all of the plaques, memorabilia and awards that adorned his walls. For three weeks, I prepared for our meeting, and I had my questions ready. I came away from that day with stories I will treasure for the rest of my life.

Creed for Life

I want to share with you the simple creed Coach Wooden kept in his wallet since his father gave it to him at the age of 12. The words on this tattered paper served as his guidepost his entire life:

Be true to yourself.

Make each day your masterpiece.

Help others.

Drink deeply from good books.

Make friendship a fine art.

Build shelter against a rainy day.

Pray for guidance and give thanks for your blessings every day.



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For 87 years, this creed molded Coach Wooden's life. When I asked him how successful he was in keeping each of these principles, he said, "You know, John, we're never perfect. But every day I still try to live up to the creed."

What a great lesson to us all. Here was a man in his late 90s, at the pinnacle of success, telling me he was still trying to live up to those principles.

Most of you who are reading this are interested in winning and learning how you can get ahead at your own businesses. So let me share with you two things that helped set Coach Wooden apart from other coaches.

First, he achieved personal victories *before* he led his team to victory. When you look at John Wooden's life, one of the things you come away with quickly is he was truly disciplined. Many people feel that a leader's biggest challenge is leading other people. I don't subscribe to this opinion. The biggest challenge as a leader is *living* the life of a leader. As I listened to Coach Wooden that day, I asked myself, how could he bring such success to the teams that he led? **It was the victory he had over himself that allowed him to also help others become victorious.**

Our standard of excellence and code of conduct can be summed up by Coach Wooden's strategy to find happiness. **He said happiness comes from making and keeping nine promises:**

- 1. Promise yourself that you will talk health, happiness and prosperity as often as possible.**
- 2. Promise yourself to make all your friends know there is something in them that is special that you value.**
- 3. Promise to think only of the best, to work only for the best and to expect only the best in yourself and others.**
- 4. Promise to be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.**
- 5. Promise yourself to be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.**
- 6. Promise to forget the mistakes of the past and press on to greater achievements in the future.**
- 7. Promise to wear a cheerful appearance at all times and give every person you meet a smile.**
- 8. Promise to give so much time improving yourself that you have no time to criticize others.**
- 9. Promise to be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear and too happy to permit trouble to press on you.**



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As leaders, if we haven't won our personal battles, we'll never be able to lead other people to victories in their battles. I truly believe that everything rises and falls on leadership. In my book *The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork*, I explain that the difference between two equally talented teams is leadership. When two teams come together with all things being equal—talent, experience, desire—the team with the best leader will always win. Coach Wooden had some of the most talented individuals in the country playing for him, but talent will only get you so far. It was his superior leadership that molded this talent into some of the best teams of all time. This is the second thing that set him apart.

Coach Wooden was a master at selecting players, and he knew how to motivate each person to fulfill his role on the team. Coach Wooden told me he recruited a lot of average shooters. But he also knew each player had a spot on the floor where they shot the best. He would design plays to get these players into the areas where they shot the best. If any player shot outside of their designated area, they knew they would be joining Coach Wooden on the bench. Everyone had a role, and the majority of his players mastered their roles on the team. Wooden said, "Teamwork is not a preference; it's a requirement."

He took that mantra of teamwork to heart. One of Coach Wooden's sayings was, **"If you listen to them, they'll listen to you."** He told me that was a lesson he learned early in his coaching career. As a new coach, Wooden says he thought coaching meant pointing and directing players where they needed to be on the court. Five or six years into his career, he realized he was leading by assumption. He assumed his players had the basics under their belt; he assumed they knew what was happening in a game. That's when he learned the only way to close these gaps was to listen to his players. Once he found out where they were in their learning and basketball knowledge, he could lead and give them direction.

I learned so much from John Wooden that day in Los Angeles. The time we spent together will be etched forever on my mind. His words continue to touch lives the world over. And I don't say this about a lot of people, but after I left his home I said to myself, "I want to be just like him."

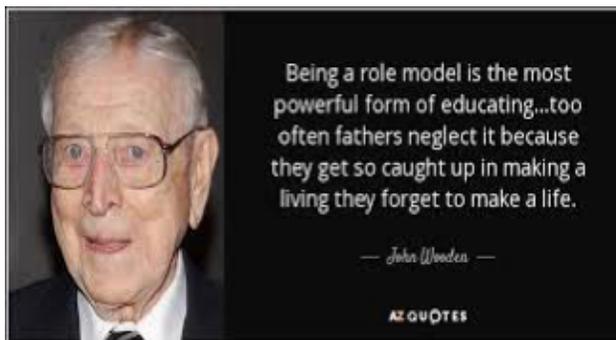
I hope you will take some of these nuggets of wisdom and look at yourself; hopefully they will have the same effect on you as they did on me.

Thanks, Coach. You are missed.



The Most Important Aspect of Coaching & Leadership: Being a Good Role Model

Jeff Haefner



The legendary coach John Wooden says, "A leader's most powerful ally is his or her own example."

As a coach, it's easy to lose sight of what is truly important. It's not about the X's and O's. It's not about winning. It's not even about putting the ball in the basket or teaching fundamentals.

The most important thing is to teach players about life. Teach them how to be happy and successful. Teach them how to be a good friend and teammate. Teach them how to live with integrity and confidence.

All coaches have a tremendous impact and influence on their players (whether they know it or not). Some of these players will remember what you do and what you tell them for the REST OF THEIR LIVES. I will never forget my playing experiences and things that my coach told me.

You have an amazing opportunity to have a positive influence on the lives of your players. You have an opportunity to improve their lives and their future.

The Ultimate Compliment for a Coach

John Wooden is arguably the best coach and most influential man in the history of basketball. He won 10 college national championships, yet he is said to be no different now than



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before he won a single game. Personal integrity is Coach Wooden's highest goal!

Bill Walton said, *"To play for John Wooden was the greatest thrill of my life. In four years, Wooden taught us everything we'd ever need to know. Not about basketball, about life."*

To me, that's the true indication of a great coach and the ultimate compliment. This is what all coaches should strive for and what all coaches would hope players say about them.

So How Do You Teach Players About Life?

The place to begin (because it's the most effective method) is by setting a good example and being a good role model. This is the most important aspect of coaching. There's no question that the absolute best way to influence players is by setting a good example.

But what kind of example are you setting each day in your actions and words?

I GUARANTEE the example you set is different than you think!!!

How do you handle adversity and difficult situations? (Your players are watching you.) Do you yell at the refs? Do your actions contradict the words that come out of your mouth? How do your players really see you as a coach?

I can't tell you how many coaches (myself included) will say one thing and then contradict themselves with their actions. For example, a coach might say, "Teamwork is what this team needs to be successful! Trust your teammates. Pass them the ball. Move the ball around."

Then no more than two minutes later, the coach will run a drill and correct every thing the player does wrong. The coach will also step in front of the assistant, while the assistant stands on the sideline watching.

What do these actions tell your players? It tells them that you don't trust your players to figure things out on their own. And you don't trust your assistant coaches to help you. You try to do everything yourself instead of giving your assistant specific responsibilities and trusting them to do their job right and figure things out.



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John Wooden has been quoted to say, "Be slow to correct and quick to commend."

This is a profound statement in so many ways. It's important to give your players an opportunity to learn on their own. Sure there are times when you need to correct. But doing so too often will hurt a player's confidence and shows them that you don't trust them to figure it out.

Here's another common contradiction. A coach will tell their players that rebounding is the most important thing. "Get on the boards. If you want to succeed, you need to WANT THE BALL. You need to rebound!"

We've all heard this before.

Then the coach starts practice and goes right into shooting drills and offensive plays. They might spend 5 minutes doing rebounding drills in the middle of practice. What does that tell your players? It tells them that shooting and offense is most the important thing. You spent the most time on it and that's what you did at the beginning of practice. It must be the most important thing. You might not realize it, but players pick up on these things.

Your Take Aways and Next Steps

I urge you to take time to think about the example you set and how you can be a better role model. Make a list of your coaching priorities. Review those priorities each day. This will help you keep on track.

I also urge you to read inspirational books by coaches like John Wooden and Morgan Wootten. These books remind you of what is truly important. They also remind you about the integrity and morals that the greatest coaches in the world employ. These books will help you keep on track. In fact, I suggest that you pick a couple books that you find especially inspirational.

