



“The strength of the wolf is in the pack”

COACHING LEADERSHIP – THE TEAM

Much has been written about the importance of “team” in all walks of life including hockey. We hear coaches and players saying “we are a family”, all friends, all support each other and will stand up for each other on and off the ice.

During the regular season, there will be players that need to be talked with about what being a team really means because they have never been exposed to one, or their experience was poor when they were part of one. In addition, they may be self-centered and selfish and need to learn this very important life lesson of finding ways to strengthen relationships even with those who quite frankly turn you off initially. This is very important to team success and a happy, healthy dressing room.

We see teams bond and excel at any level you want to mention, even the elite of pro teams. We all are human and down deep crave for the feelings inside that being part of a real team means. This is particularly true as families break down for whatever reasons and materialism and other distractions take over much of our society in so many ways.

It’s a beautiful thing to see a bunch of guys come together from the beginning of the season to become a real team, and then see the strength of the team come out in so many ways on and off the ice in the face of adversity to make the team successful. People ask me why I continue to coach ... this is one of the main reasons.

So, coaches, how can you really help in the playoffs when the going usually gets very tough and losing starts. It may well be you are facing a team that is way ahead of you on skill sets and depth. The odds against beating them are remote.

So, the challenge becomes, how do we help these players to be the best they can be. For me, a first is to limit the technical comments to must have core issues and focus on motivation and inspiration. Be their best cheerleader. Extra effort is going to come through psychological assets like staying and talking extremely positively, prepared to push through the physical pain of driving themselves to work harder than ever on the forecheck, on the backcheck, in puck battles, in take-aways, in finishing checks, blocking shots, crashing nets and so on, each shift for the entire game.

Show motivational itube hockey videos, and put up slogans like:

“The strength of the wolf is in the pack”



**WHEN THEY SHINE AND WIN OR LOSE, THEY WILL REMEMBER THEIR
BATTLE WITH THEIR SUPPORTING TEAMMATES AND COACHES**