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## COMMUNICATION THROUGH COACHING COLLEGE BASKETBALL

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COMMUNICATION THROUGH COACHING COLLEGE BASKETBALL

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requirements for the  
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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this paper is to explain the communication process through coaching basketball at the college level. Coaches communicate in many different ways and have different styles of coaching that help build their programs. Watching basketball from a fan's point of view is different from the coach's point of view. Coaches communicate on a daily basis, and communication is an important aspect in successfully coaching basketball at the college level. Throughout this paper communication tactics and how coaches communicate with players will be presented and explained. Communication is an important aspect in successfully coaching basketball at the college level.

*Keywords:* Communication, Coaching, Basketball

## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Communication Through Coaching College Basketball .....	1
Building a Program .....	2
Improving Communication .....	4
Coaching Styles.....	5
Coaching Objectives .....	7
Off The Court Communication .....	8
Coach To Player Communication.....	12
Communication On Court.....	14
Communication with Officials and Athletic Department.....	17
Individual Work.....	19
Coach To Coach Communication.....	21
Player to Player Communication.....	25
Coaching Through The Transfer Portal.....	27
Name, Image, and Likeness Program.....	28
Coaching Connections.....	29
Communicating through Job Interviews .....	31
Communication with Parents .....	34
Communication With the Community .....	36
Social Media.....	37
Communicating Healthy Eating .....	40
Communication Through lifting.....	41
Communication process during Injuries .....	42
Sports Betting.....	43
Coaching and Communicating During The Pandemic.....	45
Rules and Regulations In Sports .....	47
Communication Through Fundraising .....	48
Conclusion .....	49
References.....	51

## **Communication Through Coaching College Basketball**

Communication is a process that is done every day, and people communicate to send a message to each other. There are different parts of the communication process, the first being the sender. The sender is the person delivering the message, and the receiver is the person getting the message. The message is the information that the sender is relaying to the receiver. The communication channel is the method used to transmit a message. After communicating the message, you decode the message meaning that you are interpreting the message done by the receiver. After you decode the message, you then respond to the sender. When you think of communication, some people think about just having a normal conversation between people; however, when you are having that conversation with someone, you are exactly going through the communication process.

There are several different types of communication, including verbal communication, non-verbal communication, and written communication. These types of communication occur 24 hours a day, 7 days a week all over the world in all languages.

John Wooden, Mike Krzyzewski, Jim Boeheim and Bob Huggins are some of the most well-known basketball coaches. While these coaches all have had wins at the Final Four Tournaments, they all had to start from the bottom and build their programs up. In this day and age, you have to be careful about how you communicate with people in everyday situations as well as while coaching. Coaching basketball is a very challenging and rewarding position, and many people desire to coach. However, if you do not use effective communication, your coaching job could be terminated at any moment.

While communication is important in any profession, one profession that needs maximum communication is college coaching. There are many different ways coaches communicate with their team, staff and administration. The goal of this paper is to help people gain an understanding of how important communication is in coaching. One thing that I have learned from a young age being around coaching is that the best teams have coaches who communicate with their team and are more successful year after year.

### **Building a Program**

There are many different responsibilities that come with being a college basketball coach. A coach is hired at a university because they want you as a coach to win basketball games while also creating an environment that allows players to complete their academic work and graduate. When people think of the “coach” you think of someone leading and teaching a certain sport. “Coaching is all about leadership and being able to communicate and guide young players to excel. To be an excellent leader you must develop interpersonal skills to move people to action. Communication skills are essential- talking, listening, negotiating, encouraging, and consoling. Coaching is as demanding of communication skills as marathoning is of conditioning skills” (Martens, 2012, p. 1).

Being a coach at the college level, you need to know what you are doing, and when you are communicating with your team you need to be able to back it up. Building a team culture is one way to set the tone for a program.

Culture is the term we use to describe those social forces that shape our thoughts, ideas and ways of interacting with our world. Culture refers to the human-made part of our environment instead of the aspects occurring naturally. It includes tangible things such as how we dress and eat, the decorative and ritual objects we create, and even the sport we

play. It also includes intangible things such as attitudes, values, norms of behavior, learning styles, and social roles (Martens, 2012, p. 3).

Many teams in the NCAA have names for the culture they want to build, for example, the Saint Louis University men's basketball team started "Team Blue" the first year Travis Ford started coaching at Saint Louis. "Team Blue" started a foundation or culture set in place.

When developing a culture for a program, coaches and players must communicate that everyone needs to buy into the program. Team culture is influential, and some examples coaches preach to their team have a team tradition. When thinking of team tradition, you want to win as many games as possible, but also develop relationships between players and coaches. This will create a stronger bond between the team, and when it comes down to the game time, everyone will be ready.

Another component of team culture is vision. Every team should have a vision and important goals they want to set. When you communicate to your team, your vision could be working to win a conference championship or it could be to get to the Final Four. Another component of culture is being conscientious. A team needs to strive for the best, and everyone needs to become accountable for not only their actions, but the actions of the whole team. Building and changing a team's culture does not happen overnight or even in a few weeks. This is an ever-changing process where coaches have to communicate, keep a high energy level, and trust the process of what they are trying to build. When building a culture through a team, this also helps student athletes succeed in life. Student athletes come from all over the world from different backgrounds. When a coach surrounds student athletes who are eighteen to twenty-two years old in a culture where you find success and also have other guys who

## **Improving Communication**

The word coaching suggests that individuals in this profession send many messages (Burton & Raedeke, 2008). In order to succeed with their team, coaches must clearly communicate expectations, goals, standards, and feelings (Burton & Raedeke, 2008). A college basketball coach has many different jobs. A coach's first job is to guide and help student athletes grow as a person and to provide a positive academic atmosphere to they will graduate. When parents drop off their children on move-in day, they expect the coach to become responsible for that young adult. A good coach will help that young adult in any way possible. Guiding young people and coaching them up makes you a leader. A key component to being a leader is to communicate at a high level to gain the respect and attention of each player. One of the great things about coaching is your relationships with the student athletes. Every student athlete is different, and coaches have to determine how to communicate with each player to get the maximum potential out of them. The ability to communicate clearly and effectively with the team is the key to a successful business (Emerson, 2021). Communication skills can be improved to help further the team's success. Emerson (2021) demonstrated eight ways to maximize communication skills. Emerson (2021) stated that to improve upon communication an individual must be clear and concise, prepared, be mindful of nonverbal communication, watch their tone, practice active listening, build upon emotional intelligence, develop a workplace communication strategy, and create a positive organizational culture.

The first step to maximizing communication skills is to ensure that ideas are clear before communicating.. Secondly, one must be prepared ahead of time. It is important to know what you're going to say before beginning to communicate. This way one is able to think about how they may respond to questions or criticism (Emmerson, 2021). Thirdly, a coach needs to be



mindful of nonverbal communication. According to Emmerson (2021), nonverbal cues can have 65-93% more impact than the spoken word. Therefore, it is important to learn to read nonverbal cues and control their own. The fourth on the list is watching the way one's tone is used. How an individual says something can add power to your message or undermine it (Emmerson, 2021). Tone can create or break trust; therefore it is important for coaches to keep their tone in mind when communicating with their team. The fifth step is to practice active listening. Communication almost always involves two parties; therefore it is equally important for an individual to listen as it is to verbally communicate (Emmerson, 2021). The sixth step is to build upon emotional intelligence. An individual must first assess and understand their own feelings before being able to communicate successfully with others (Emmerson, 2021).

The seventh step is to develop a workplace communication strategy. Coaches need to figure out a way to convey and ensure that staff and players receive information (Emmerson, 2021). The eighth and final step is to create a positive organizational culture. It is important for a coach to create an environment that is transparent, trusting, empathic and has an open dialogue. By doing this it'll be easier for the staff and team to effectively communicate. (Emmerson, 2021).

### **Coaching Styles**

Coaches all come from different backgrounds, and they all have different coaching backgrounds. Most coaches have coaches that they looked up to and have a mentor who helped guide them to where they are today. Mentors give advice and help lead the new generation into success. Mentors also help give coaches advice about their coaching style. Growing up playing different sports is very important in a child's life and many children have been exposed to different coaches as they have played different sports. All coaches have their different style of

coaching that is either command style, submissive style or cooperation style. These styles all have different ways that coaches interact and communicate with their team. The first style of coaching is the command style. With the command style of coaching, the coach makes all the decisions and the student athlete's responsibility is to respond to the coach's commands.

Command style is a style of coaching that brings out different types of communication that can be positive or negative. Command style coaches are hard on their players and expect them to do everything they tell them. This coaching style sometimes prevents student athletes from excelling. One coach that is a prime example of the command style is Bob Knight. Coach Knight is a well-known college basketball coach who had a contentious when disciplining his players. According to *Successful coaching* fourth edition "for some college players, Knight provided a wake-up call. By trying to live up to his standards, some players found they could improve their play" (Martens, 2012, p. 71). This type of coaching style brings communication in the form of yelling and negative interaction.

Coaches who use the command style can lose players to the transfer portal because of the public and personal humiliation that is brought to the student athlete. The next coaching style is the submissive style coaching. This style is a laid-back coaching style which provides a lack of competence and confidence to give advice and guidance to players. Coaches who use this style don't develop relationships with their players and don't care about their program. The last coaching style is the cooperative style. This type of coaching style adds and shares the decision making with their student athletes. According to Martens (2012), "Although they recognize their responsibility to provide leadership and guide young people towards achieving the objectives set forth, cooperative-style coaches also know that young people cannot become responsible adults without learning to make decisions" (p. 227). This type of style can prove to be challenging for

coaches because they might be too open with players. They may find it difficult to find the balance between directing athletes play calls and letting athletes direct on their own play calls. Cooperative coaches communicate to their players on the court but also teach them life lessons off the court. One coach who is well known for being a cooperative coach is Phil Jackson.

According to successful coaching

Martens (2012) found that:

Phill Jackson approached basketball with the idea that everyone on the team should participate in play, not just one or two stars. As the coach for the Chicago Bulls and the Los Angeles Lakers, he instituted the triangle offense, a difficult system to learn but one in which all players handle the ball and worked together. (p. 120).

Coach Jackson was the type of coach who talked and listened to his players to make sure that they were put in the right situation to be successful. His coaching style made players enjoy playing for him and the relationships that were built from communicating on and off the court won him six National Basketball Association (NBA) championships. These coaching styles have many pros and cons and each style reflects how coaches communicate and interact with their players. Many coaches try to combine different components of the coaching styles to get the best outcome.

### **Coaching Objectives**

Just like individuals that run a business, basketball coaches must perform several functions in order for their team to be successful. In the business world, managers must train their staff to promote success for their company; coaches must do the same to ensure a winning team (Fizel & D'itri, 1996). In order to reach their overall goal of victory, a coach must first complete a variety of objectives. One objective of a coach is to motivate their players. A coach

can either motivate their team with fear or negative consequences or they can utilize positive reinforcements and actions (Kish & Woodard, 2005). Research found that when players were given positive motivational techniques greater achievement was accomplished (Kish & Woodard, 2005). Another main objective of a coach is to develop players every year. In order to develop players a coach must help the players develop goals and work to achieve them. Goal setting helps athletes remain focused and they can help players enhance their motivation (Patel, 2022). Goals should be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely (SMART). The editors of Simplilearn (2022), stated that specific goals are simple and are not broad, measurable goals are quantifiable, achievable goals are attainable, realistic goals are reasonable, and timely goals have a clear timeline.

### **Off The Court Communication**

Communication is key for any basketball coach. Coaches have many different methods of communication with their players. One method is scouting reports. Scouting reports are an important item for coaches. Scouting reports contain information about opposing teams such as their name, size and stats. This gives teams an advantage regarding the opposing teams and gives insight about the players (Seifried, 2004). Scouting reports contain information about play style, players' moves, which hand the opposing player does the most and relays strengths and weaknesses of players.

In this day and age, scouting reports have become more advanced. There are many different websites coaches use to watch every game and obtain the stats from every player in college basketball (Trunic & Milovanovic, 2022). At the division one level, the coaching staff includes a head coach and three assistant coaches. Before the season starts the headcoach will communicate with their staff and decide which coach will be responsible for scouting report

duties over the course of the year. The scouting reports are normally spread out evenly, so each coach has the same number of games as the others. The head coaches watch film to gain a deeper insight of the abilities of their opponents (Trunic & Milovanovic, 2022). The head coaches then communicate these insights to the staff and team. Coaches have different philosophies about how to present each scouting report (Sicko, 2021).

One way to present the scouting report is to watch film of the team. The assistant coaches will have a video of each starting player and three to five bench players. The assistant will also give film on different set plays that the opposing team runs and will communicate on how they will defend each player. The head coach will give his input on how they play. He will communicate key points about the opposing team and how to win. Video scouting has changed over time. However, the general basis of scouting allows greater insight in how to better prepare for opposing teams from both a coaching and player viewpoint (Sicko, 2021). After the team watches the film, the team will head out to the gym and go over what the scouting report says again. Many teams have scout teams where every day before the game, the scout team will run and act like the opposing team to stimulate a game-like feel. When the scout team is playing and your team is defending, the head coach and the three assistants will pause the game play and break down different points on how they want to defend it. When coaches break down each play, they talk to their players and try to help them in any way possible.

One way coaches teach is how to defend a ball screen. Ball screens are on top of scouting reports over the last couple of years. A ball screen is when an offensive player legally blocks the path of a defender to open up another player for a shot or to receive a pass.

According to Noivo (as cited in Vaquera et al., 2016),

Ball screens are appointed as one of the most difficult actions to defend, in which the screener plays a decisive role to create an advantage for the ball handler and, consequently, an opportunity to score. Taking into account its importance in modern basketball, some authors focused their analysis exclusively on ball screens and its outcomes. For example, Polykratis et al. (2010) showed that the Greek national team was more successful than its opponents when passing the ball inside after the screen. Furthermore, it was found that, in Europe, ball screens were more effective when the dribbler passed the ball to the roller and when two passes were performed after the screen (Marmarinos et al., 2016), whereas in the Olympic Games the drive and pass to the roller were the offensive actions that most contributed to ball screen effectiveness (p. 150).

Coaches have to communicate with their players and tell them how to guard the different screens. One way to guard the screen is to go over the screen and the player guarding the ball has to fight over the top of the screen and stick with its player. Going over the screen is used when the opposing player is an excellent three-point shooter, and this also helps the opposing player get off the three-point line. The second way is to go under the screen and meet the player after the screen is done.

Going under the screen is effective when the person with the ball is not an effective three-point shooter and more of a driver. Another way is to switch the screen. Switching the screen is when the person guarding the screener, guards the person who is dribbling off the screen. This way of guarding a screen is becoming more popular in today's game. NBA teams are now switching more and more ball screens because of how effective each player is becoming on defense. Switching ball screens during college basketball is effective if you have players one

through five who can guard every player on the floor. Another effective way of guarding the ball screen is hedging the screen.

As an offensive player coming off a ball screen, coaches always communicate with their players to go “north and south” the high hard hedge makes the defender go east and west and away from the basket. Novio also states about scouting reports, “In order to help basketball coaches to make accurate tactical and strategical decisions, as well as to better understand the complex network of factors affecting individual and team performance, researchers have been resorting to the performance analysis to identify single and multiple movement patterns during competitions (Drust, 2010, p. 23).

Using video analysis - a broadly employed method to assess team tactics (Hughes & Bartlett, 2002) - several studies have been showing that some game actions are more important than others” (p. 23). The use of scouting reports only helps the players as well, coaches also only communicate with their players on the court and some even only tell the team about the opposing team the day of the game. Telling your players, the opponent’s strengths and weaknesses makes your team focus on themselves and helps get them ready for the game and not worry about the other team.

When talking scouting reports with players coaches also have to accommodate which type of defensive that you want to play. When watching film and looking at the stats that your assistant coaches give you there are two types of defensive that you can play a man-to-man defense or a zone defensive. Man to man defensive is when all five players match up to another player and their job is to force them not to score. When playing man to man defensive coaches will talk to their players in the pre-season about where to be when guarding off the ball and what to do on guarding the ball. Zone defense is an effective defense if the opposing team is a drive

heavy basketball team. This defensive forces teams to shoot the three-point shot and also makes the paint packed.

There are different types of zone defenses that you can run, the first being Jim Boeheim bread and butter defensive the two three zone. The two three zone starts off with two defenders at the top of the zone and three at the bottom of the paint lined up. When the ball moves each player reacts and gets to a certain spot wherever the ball is at. The next zone is the three two zone, this zone has three players at the top of the key and two at the wing spots on the zone. The two players at the bottom of the zone start off at the blocks and are responsible for the corners and short corner players. Another zone that is played is the one three one zone. This zone has a player at the top of the key and three alongside in the middle having one in the middle and the other two at the wings. The bottom guy has the most responsibility in this zone, the job of the bottom is play baseline to baseline and guard each corner. Another zone is the matchup zone, according to Andrews (2007) an important technique in the matchup involves the exchange of responsibility. The exchange or responsibility refers to handing off your man to the next defender in the zone. When teaching players about the zone a coach must communicate that every player must play their part in order for any defensive zone to work. For instance, when teaching the match up zone, the coach must demonstrate that there are different rules. If the offense gets the ball to the block, they can score often on high- percentage shots (Andrews, 2007, p. 15).

### **Coach To Player Communication**

Coach to player communication is one of the most important tools you need to win basketball games. Communication happens on and off the court but after scouting reports are done it's time to play the game and communication as a coach comes out in full force. The time



leading up to the game, players arrive at the gym two hours before tip-off. During that time players have all the time they need to get taped and ready to play the game.

Coaches during this time are doing last minute preparations to get their team ready. In the preseason coaches go over what they want their players to do before a game, this is done in practice and coaches communicate what drills they want their players to do before tip-off. When players are out doing pregame drills, the head coach is in the locker room getting ready to talk to the team before the game and getting a pregame speech ready.

According to Vargas and Short (2011),

Some of the most memorable scenes in sports movies, like *Miracle*, are those when the coach is delivering his pre-game speech. Many of the greatest quotes in sport history come alive through these clips. Even though Hollywood may take some liberty when recreating these moments, sport psychology researchers have shown that coaches are an important source of external information for athletes, and that what coaches say, when they say it, and how often they say it, can significantly alter the learning, development, and performance of athletes. (p.1)

One of the most important roles of a coach is to prepare their athletes for competition (Short & Short, 2005). Game day preparation is vital for optimal performance, yet much is still unknown about how coaches can best influence their athletes during this critical time period. Researchers have shown that coaches use various communication-based techniques, including pre-game speeches (Allen & Howe, 1998; Amorose & Weiss, 1998; Gould et al., 1989; Feltz et al., 2008).

Information on pre-game speeches, from the perspectives of coaches and athletes, can be gleaned from the popular media” (Vargas et. al 2011., p 28). After the pregame speech is over,

coaches go to their whiteboards and go over keys to the game and who is guarding who. As a basketball coach, you are coaching fifteen to seventeen student athletes and the reason why they are at the school is to get an education and also to win basketball games. One thing coaches do is also become a consular and a role model to their players. Being a consular comes with the job as a basketball coach. According to O'Donovan and O'Leary, Coaching is a process which necessarily involves the engagement of the client with a coach. In order for this to take place, typically the client will seek out coaching support in developing an action plan to deal with particular issues or interference in their lives which are blocking them from developing or being as they would like (e.g., International Coaching Federation, 2009). As a starting point, therefore, the client must be prepared to engage with coaching.

### **Communication On Court**

During the game coaches communicate throughout the game in different ways. You have coaches that stand up the whole game and coaches who sit down and observe in different ways. Head coaches talk throughout the game with players and officials, when talking to players on the court they are communicating which play to run and different tips. Assistant coaches are communicating with players on the court and communicating with the players on the bench. Coaches have knowledge of the game that players sometimes don't see during the game. If coaches see something that the opposing team is doing, then coaches will help and give direction to the players to help improve gameplay.

Whenever a team is tired or not playing well, timeouts give coaches either thirty seconds or one-minute timeouts to communicate with their team.

According to Prieto et al (2016),

A timeout request can be considered as one of the most important tools in team sports management that allows coaches to provide direct instructions to their players.

Instructions given by coaches during timeouts have been studied from different perspectives, such as critical plays, indications for starters or substitutes, last minutes of the games, and timeout decisions (Gómez et al., 2011, p. 116). Moreover, coaches' cognitive abilities when making decisions during a competition (including timeouts) have been described in several team sports, such as basketball volleyball Quality of these decisions may be decisive in the course and outcome of the game, thus reflecting coaches' team management skills. (p.116)

Timeouts give coaches different options to help their team. The first reason to call a timeout is to cut the scoring run that the opponent's team is on. Basketball is a game of runs. Calling timeouts gives the other team a chance to sit back down on the bench and make them cold while the coach can communicate in a positive way to your team. Another reason to call a timeout for coaches is to adjust how teams are playing the game.

On any given night you see many teams play better than other nights, during timeouts coaches communicate with each other and either change up how they are running the offensive or changing the defensive to help change the game. Timeouts can also be a great way to give your team a rest. Playing a forty-minute game is not an easy thing to do and timeouts give a chance for coaches to give players rest and communicate how they can win the game.

During the game, coaches communicate with their players from the sidelines, in tough environments like at Fogg Allen Fieldhouse at the University of Kansas or at the Pit in New Mexico, coaches have a hard time communicating with their teams because of how loud the gyms get. Halftime is a key time for coaches to be able to make different adjustments with the

staff and try to change the game to help their team win. At halftime coaches meet outside the locker room or depending on how nice an University is the coaches locker room and talk about what they are going to do in the second half. This is also a great spot where players can communicate with each other and get on the same page for the second time.

According to Avugos (2020) “The half-time talk is generally perceived as an intimate meeting between coaches and their players. No outsiders are allowed during this private session. Metaphorically, it is described as “the inner sanctum” (p.129). Avugos also breaks down the three key points to improve a halftime talk with their team, “What should be the purpose of the talk? All coaches emphasized that the purpose of their talk varies according to the players’ performance, as well as to their opponent’s functioning during the first half of the game. They consider a variety of factors influencing the focus or purpose of their talk, such as the point in time within the season, the team’s ranking in the league, the relative abilities of the players compared to their opponents, and the energy that the players exhibited during the first half of the game.

“What should “ideally” be said when giving an effective talk? All coaches agreed that the half-time talk should be very brief and include three or four messages at the most. They suggested that coaches should concentrate on tactical comments to be implemented in the second half of the game, along with statements aimed at motivating and encouraging the players. Two coaches expressed a somewhat different view, claiming that tactical instructions should be made in real-time during the game, while the half-time period should be focused on mental aspects. 3. How does the half-time talk influence the game? The coaches were generally skeptical about the effect that their half-time speech might have on the players’ performance, and ultimately on the outcome of the game. They supported their skepticism by saying that every game involves

coaches from competing teams who address their players – both wish to” (Avugos, 2020, p. 137)

### **Communication with Officials and Athletic Department**

During the game officials of the game play a huge role in the games. Referees call fouls and have an impact to change the game with one call. How coaches communicate with their players is different than how coaches communicate with officials. Coaches who coach for many years devolve relationships with officials all over the country. Coaches have to know where the line is when talking to officials because as a coach you have to back up your players on bad calls and have to let your players know that you will go to war for them. If coaches cross that line it could impact the coach and impact how the game will be called every time that official calls your games.

Referees are human and they will make mistakes, some officials do more traveling then colleges do for games. It is a heavy workload and for forty minutes they are running up and down the court.

According to Blob et al (2020),

Referees in sports games have a high level of responsibility as they have to make correct and appropriate decisions at any point during a match. Regarding referees’ decision-making (RDM) as a perceptual-cognitive process, evidence suggests that physical load might reduce cognitive performance and thus might reduce RDM performance as well. In consideration of increasing game dynamics, referees have to cope with high physical load, but they have to make correct and appropriate decisions further on. (p. 149)

Coaches have to maintain great communication contact with people inside the athletic department. Coaches need a strong support group behind the scenes and the athletic department plays a key role in the success of a coach's program.

When you think of people in the athletic department you have people who work and are in charge of different jobs inside a University. The athletic director is the head person who oversees everyone who is working in the department. It is the athletic director's job to communicate with his employees to make sure everything is working smoothly, and everything is on time. There are many different jobs that go into a program. The first job that coaches will find a lot around the offices is the person who deals with school grades and eligibility. This person communicates with the head coach and makes class schedules, meets with athletes about grades and also makes sure that they are eligible to play. Coaches find the academic adviser a helpful hand and having them around makes everything go well on the academic side. Another important job is the financial adviser that Universities have. College basketball teams eat, stay in hotels and travel around the country to games and coaches travel in the off season to find future student athletes, the job of financial advisers is to make sure that the program stays on budget and doesn't go over that budget.

Another job inside the athletic department is the facilities advisers. Their job is to communicate with all of the athletic coaches to schedule gym practices and weight room times. As a head coach, the relationship between the athletic director and a coach makes everything run right and makes your program grow.

According to Hurley (2018),

While athletic directors are not always coaches (sometimes they are), they do like to know what is going on with each of their teams. Be communicative and provide updates

to your athletic director, keeping him/her up to date with everything that is going on, to ensure that the athletic department is informed and guided. If there is ever a dispute or conflict within your team, be sure to get his/her input and guidance on the matter. Often, they will be able to offer support and communicative assistance in dealing with upset players, parents or even other coaches. They are very experienced in this regard, and always can offer helpful support. (p. 1)

The support system matters in coaching, having a strong group behind you and developing a good communication model between people in the athletic department will bring success to the program.

### **Individual Work**

Coaches communicate with their players every day. One way that coaches communicate with their players is doing individual workouts. After a bad practice or even after a bad game coaches like to bring players in for one-on-one workouts to see where players' heads are. Coaches deal with all players during the day and there are certain players that need to have more communication than other players.

When players come into the program coaches have a sense of what kind of student athlete they are getting. Being a student athlete and depending on which University you go to is different, when you go to a SEC or Big Ten school student athletes will have a type of pressure on them compared to students around campus.

According to Caulfield et al., (2021)

Student-athletes, similar to other college students, find themselves adapting to a new environment, have to learn to be responsible for managing their time, balance their extracurricular activities with the demands of college coursework, explore their new-

found freedom, and make choices in their personal behavior regarding sexuality, alcohol, and drug use. However, participation in intercollegiate athletics imposes additional demands on student athletes. (p. 603)

The typical day of a student-athlete is fully scheduled, whether they are in or out of season. Demands within the academic portion of a student-athletes' day consist of classes, tutors, study tables, and class projects (Neal et al., 2013). In addition, there are physical demands that are placed on the student-athlete, such as conditioning, practice sessions, games, treatment and injury rehabilitation (Neal et al., 2013). Community and media obligations can also add social demands that can become taxing for the student athlete (Neal et al., 2013). "Conversely, high levels of habitual physical activity and access to a built-in social support system in the form of teammates, coaches, and team health care providers (e.g., athletic trainers) could be assumed to reduce mental health burden among athletes" (Edwards, et Al, 2022, p. 76). Coaches have to understand and be able to coach certain players differently than others. Coaches can still work and push kids the same but how you communicate with them could make that kids on the court and off the court life better.

Coaches also meet with players off the court to communicate struggles in the classroom or any different problems they might be having at the time. Coaches like to bring certain players into the film room and communicate to them about their play on the court and also to scout players that they will be playing in the coming weeks. Coaches have different philosophies about film, some coaches love to bring in student athletes to communicate about different things on the court or just talk about how everything is going in the team. You also have coaches who only like to communicate on the court about different scouts and will pull players aside after practice on the court.



## **Coach To Coach Communication**

Coaching is all about the student athletes that you coach. To help those students you have to develop a staff of assistant coaches, director of basketball operation and a graduate assistant. Having a coaching staff that is tight knotted and close outside the game of basketball only helps the program. Coaching staff are always communicating all day, all year long. Phone calls, text messages, zoom calls and working before and after practices/games.

One of the major talking points that coaches communicate about is recruiting. Every year college basketball teams change, players graduate, or they transfer schools. When players graduate it hurts the program because your senior leaders have to leave the program and the leadership that they brought to their program. In the past couple of years, the transfer portal has changed the game of basketball and how coaches communicate with players on how they can get them to come to their schools. Before April fourteenth, 2021, if players want to transfer schools, they have to sit out a basketball season and wait for the following year to start. Players that transferred then could still be on scholarship and practice with the team and attend class. Now student athletes can transfer schools and can attend their new schools and play right away.

When coaches recruit a plan has to be set to see what players they need to fill their roster. Before each coach decides and communicates with high school coaches, AAU program coaches, and parents of the future student athlete, coaches need to lay out the guidelines of how student athletes need to perform not just on the court but also off the court.

According to the NCAA Division One Manual (2022)

All entering freshman and transfer (two-year or four-year) students must be enrolled in summer school to be eligible for summer access. After the freshman year: 2.2 GPA and 30 credit hours. After the sophomore year: 2.2 GPA and successfully completed 50

percent of degree program requirements. After the junior year: 2.2 GPA and successfully completed 75 percent of degree program requirements. A student-athlete would be able to practice with coaches only while actually enrolled in the summer session, even if it's less than the allowed eight-week period, unless he meets the academic standards. Incoming freshmen at service academies enrolled in summer preparation programs would be allowed to take part in practice. (p.150)

Once the groundwork is ready coaches then communicate on the phone and talk to future players about being interested in attending their University. In this day in age social media is a key tool that coaches use to know what players are playing at a high level and who is ready to go from high school and play at the college level. Coaches now have the ability to look at film that players put out and see if these future players are legit or don't have a chance at all. Every July there are tournaments all over the country where high school players play for AAU programs. AAU programs are summer teams where the best of the best play on teams from around the area and have a chance to put their talent on for coaches.

Coaches communicate with their fellow coaches and see what city they need to go to see these players. Games in July start at eight in the morning and games last to ten at night. When coaches go to events, coaches buy books that contain AAU coaches names, phone numbers and addresses also containing players names, phone numbers, social media handles, and high school that the player attended. These books are the main reason how coaches contact players and how the communication process starts. Whenever a coach contacts certain players that they want to bring into their schools they want the future student athletes to see campus and be able to see what the program that these coaches have built.

There are two different types of visits that coaches can have for their players, one is an unofficial visit when players are invited to see campus, but the coaches and university can't pay for any of the families' travels or hotels. An official visit is when coaches and the University pay for all travel expenses and food expenses that are needed. Both of these visits give the whole coaching staff a chance to sit down with the player and also a chance to communicate and get to know if this future player and their families. After all the visits are done then coaches continue to grow their relationships with players by talking on the phone and attending their high school games.

Coaches go out recruiting many different times a year, but head coaches need to communicate to their coaches that there are also dead periods and recruiting periods. Recruiting periods and dead periods have changed over the years.

However, according to the NCAA Division One Manual (2023)

September 9 through the Sunday beginning the week for the fall signing of the National Letter of Intent: Recruiting Period (b) Monday through Thursday of the week that includes the initial date for the fall signing of the National Letter of Intent: Dead Period (c) The Friday of the week for the fall signing of the National Letter of Intent through March 31 [except for (1) below and subject to 13.17.2-(e)]: Recruiting Period (1) December 24 through December 26: Dead Period (d) April 1 through the Wednesday immediately prior to the NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Championship game [applicable only if April 1 falls on a Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday]: Quiet Period (e) The Thursday immediately prior to the NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Championship game to noon on the Thursday immediately after the game: Dead Period 4/4/23 142 (f) Noon on the Thursday immediately after the NCAA Division I Men's

Basketball Championship game through seven days following the initial date for the spring signing of the National Letter of Intent [except for (1) below and subject to 13.17.2- (g)-(1)]: Recruiting Period (1) Monday through Thursday of the week that includes the initial date for the spring signing of the National Letter of Intent: Dead Period (g) The eighth day after the initial date for the spring signing of the National Letter of Intent through July 5 [except for (1) through (5) below]: Quiet Period (1) Up to two weekends in April (Friday through Sunday) other than Easter weekend and a weekend during which the PSAT, SAT or ACT national standardized tests are administered: Evaluation Periods (for certified events only) (2) The four days immediately following each April evaluation period: Recruiting Period (3) The day after the conclusion of the spring National Letter of Intent signing period through the Friday before the first permissible day to conduct institutional basketball camps [except for (i) below]: Dead Period (i) National Basketball Association Draft Combine: Evaluation Period (4) Two days of the National Basketball Players Association Top 100 Camp: Evaluation Period (5) The final two Friday (noon) through Sunday (6 p.m.) periods in June: Evaluation Periods (for approved scholastic events only) (h) July 6 through July 31 [except for (1) through (3) below]: Dead Period (1) The first Thursday-Sunday period in July beginning on or after July 6: Evaluation Period (2) The days when the College Basketball Academy is conducted: Evaluation Period (for College Basketball Academy only) (3) The day after the conclusion of the College Basketball Academy through July 31: Quiet Period (i) August 1 through September 8 [except for (1) below]: Quiet Period (1) August 6 through August 15: Dead Period” (NCAA) These rules are very important to follow for coaches. If coaches break these rules there could be a damaging impact for a

program. In years before the NCAA has brought down sanctions on teams and even forced firing certain coaches who break the NCAA rules. (p.109)

### **Player to Player Communication**

Players communicate with each other on and off. Teams who have great communication with each other is the difference between a championship team and a bad team. When on the court, players communicate to each other about many things. On the offensive side you see many different nonverbal communications like head movement or eye contact. The use of nonverbal communication helps players get one step ahead of the opposing team. When players get to the college level coaches and players use nonverbal communication with players from different countries.

Many players from different countries speak little English so nonverbal is used on the basketball court.

According to Ban & Bucur (2020),

The non-verbal language refers to the voluntary or involuntary transmission of information and the application of influence through the behavioral elements and physical presence of the individual or other social units (groups or human units), as well as the perception and use of space and time along with the artifacts. We consider that not using the words actually denotes non-verbal communication, whether we refer to body language or paraverbal communication. (p. 57)

Players also use verbal communication when calling players and talking throughout practices in games. Coach preaches communication to players on different types of drills that are done during practice.

When coaches tell players they need to communicate more during practice, this could mean many different examples. Coaches like when players communicate and cheer each other up. When players cheer each other up and use positive communication like “great job” or “good move”, this will boost players' confidence on and off the court. When watching a basketball game, the great teams communicate on the court on the defensive side every game. During the game there are many different plays that the opposing team runs. Many of these involve players having to switch or defend another player. Every team has different ways they communicate between each other on the court, teams use specific forms of communication that leads to the focus aspect of using communication.

Depending on what defense coaches use, players are required to talk on defense and communicate about things that happen on the court. One of those examples on talking on defense is when a point guard may not see a screen that is coming, the player who is guarding the screener needs to say screen left or screen right and help the point guard avoid running into the screen. This helps the point guard not get hurt from a strong screen from the opponent and also saves the whole team from giving an easy basket up during that position. One of these ways players communicate with each other is at halftime. As mentioned in the previous section, coaches communicate with themselves on different changes that they want to make for the next half. Players also use this time to adjust themselves on how they will use verbal communication and nonverbal communication to adjust for the next half.

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, coaches preach to have a great culture and to have great communication throughout the team. One of those ways to improve culture is having team bonding exercises that improve communication on the team. These events can be planned by coaches or players. Some of these events could be team bowling night or team movie to help

team chemistry and get them involved in social things outside basketball. According to Saizew (2021) athletes and coaches have described how close social or task bonds within subsets of teammates can enhance the pursuit of team or individual goals. Having leadership on a basketball team is key to having a great basketball program, coaches can communicate with their team about how to get there or all the x and o's they need to run.

When teams are on a losing streak or if they are not all on the same page, players could call a player only meeting to communicate the problems that they are having at that time. These meetings could help and could bring the team back to the way they need to be at. Player only meetings are usually called by the seniors or the captain of the team. The captain of the team will start off the meeting and call out every problem that they think is going on. The main goal of the captain to start these meetings off strong is to be brutally honest about problems, these problems might offend players and the communication process could go from positive to negative or start negative and become positive in the process. According to Rabinowitz (2023), teams need to examine their own work and understand the reasons for successes and failures, so they can improve and develop. An example of these team meetings is bringing the first topic to be echoes of what the coach has been communicating before the meeting, then moving on into an open conversation about problems that other student athletes have.

### **Coaching Through The Transfer Portal**

The transfer portal has also changed the game over the past two years, which opened in October 2018 (Dohrn, 2022). With kids now being able to transfer without having to sit out a year hurts high school players coming into college. The transfer portal has been an important talking point for the NCAA, as over the past two years we have seen the transfer portal has grown popular with student athletes. The numbers of transfers have jumped up every year and

every year a two person increase of student athletes entering the portal (Dohrn, 2022). This gives college coaches a chance to change their whole program through the transfer portal. College programs have about eleven to fifteen scholarships a year to give to their student athletes, every year players graduate leading anywhere from one to six possible scholarships to open up. When college coaches are going through a process of picking new players that they want to sign they ask the question do I want a eighteen year old who is straight out of high school who has zero experience at the college level or should we take a player who is in the portal who already has one to three years' experience at the college level? Coaches now evaluate and communicate with different coaches about certain players that are in the portal. There are many different reasons why student athletes transfer, players might not like the coaching staff/ not coachable or a player needs to get out of a certain situation and be closer to home. With the transfer portal now coaches have to do even more communicating with staff and the team to see if this certain player can fit into the program. Hence, the transfer portal has raised an issue for coaches and programs concerned with student athlete transfers (Dohrn, 2022).

### **Name, Image, and Likeness Program**

Another new thing that coaches are now dealing with is the new name, image and likeness program (NIL)deals that players are getting. NIL full name is name, image and likeness. NIL has been in the process for many years. Student athletes have been speaking out to NCAA members, athletic administration and also coaches about getting paid.

According to Kunkel et al (2021)

On 29 October 2019, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) issued a press release announcing its intent to enhance its rules, starting in 2021, to permit student athletes to benefit from the use of their name, image, and likeness (NIL), which



represents their right of publicity (NCAA, 2019). Currently, student-athletes competing across the three divisions of the NCAA in the United States are classified as amateurs (NCAA, n.d.), and are not allowed to monetize their NIL. While student-athletes are not professionals, the atmosphere surrounding games is often much closer to a professional sport setting than an amateur one. This blurred line of amateurism is most obvious in the largest revenue generating sports – football and men’s basketball. Both Division I football and men’s basketball tournament (March Madness) games are often televised in local and national markets, and are complete with expensive tickets, merchandise, and sold out crowds of passionate fans that rival the fan bases of the sports’ professional counterparts. (p. 839)

NIL now gives another great recruiting topic to communicate to their players. Athletic programs are now building different programs that help student athletes get more deals.

### **Coaching Connections**

The question that gets asked is “how do you get into coaching at the college level?” To get into coaching you see coaches now that have a type of playing resume or someone who has been around college basketball like a student manager or practice player.

Connections are the main reason how coaches get jobs; it helps to win games but starting out you need to have connections to get to that point in coaching. One way to connect with coaches is the Final Four. Every year your teams’ number top goals are to win your conference tournament, play in the NCAA tournament and play for a national championship. One service that coaches can use for connections is the Sport Human Connection (SHC) for the use of different connections. According to Adi, the SHC application is an online marketplace for sport coaches. (Adi et al., 2022)

The Final Four is the four teams who won consecutive games in the NCAA tournament. Each year there is a different city that hosts each tournament. If your team makes it to the Final Four, the coaches' job is to win the national championship. The game schedule for the Final Four at the end of March beginning of April Friday and Monday. Coaches have the opportunity to go to the convention that is put on for coaches. Thursday through Monday, coaches had the chance to communicate with other coaches and learn from different coaches at the convention center. The convention gives coaches different opportunities to listen to different coaches talk about different situations in game situations, how to communicate with referees, offensive and defensive plays. While at these different talks, coaches communicate by asking questions and talk to different coaches about how their year went or talking about certain things that happen to them that year.

The convention at the Final Four is broken down into Thursday through Sunday. There are a lot of sessions coaches can attend to learn and communicate with other coaches. The National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC) (2023) puts on a convention for the Final Four. The NABC provides a schedule for the Final Four convention that looks like a 12 pm roundtable among coaches. At this round table, coaches will learn and communicate about game-like situations into player development and coaches will get a chance to learn more about Title IX and talk about past events that can help for the future.

This schedule overview will provide coaches a place where coaches can go out to communicate with each other off the court as well. Coaches are humans also and having the time off and talking with other coaches helps because they are all in the same boat and all of them know what their lives are like. After communicating with other coaches this is also a time where University's also do interviews to hire new coaches.

After the year is over in late March early April, coaches' lives can change for the better or for the worse. After coaches lose their jobs, the Final Four is a place where you can communicate with other coaches to try to get a job for the next year. Athletic directors like using the Final Four as a place to interview coaches because it gives them a chance to meet coaches on a neutral site and coaches can give a great first impression before going on another interview at the school. The Final Four is the place where coaches can be coaches. Having this one weekend of the year helps them by learning and gaining different connections that can help a coach in the moment and also for the future.

### **Communicating through Job Interviews**

Job interviews happen every day, people are hiring new people at high rates and there are many different types of communication that goes into getting a Job. Getting a new job in college basketball takes verbal and nonverbal communication. According to Tsvetkov (2014), "The term "interview" comes from the French language and its root "entrevue" derives from the verb entrevoir, meaning to behold, to foresee. With time it has undergone a number of terminological combinations and synonyms appeared in the different languages" (p.198). Before you get an interview or try to get an interview, coaches have a resume and a cover letter that helps future Universities get an idea about who you are as a person and what former jobs that you have had.

A resume is written communication, and this is the first stage of getting a job. A resume helps athletic directors decide which resume stands out because once a job in coaching comes open, it is posted on social media and many different coaches around the country apply to the job. For first time coaches who either just graduated college or played a couple of years at the professional level, they usually start off as a graduate assistant or a director of basketball

operation. According to (Robinson 2015), a graduate assistant is an assistant where their job is to make sure that everything is running smoothly behind the scenes and when to do whatever the head coach or other people on the staff needs. A director of basketball operations does all the plans for travel, gear and all the food that is needed for a program. When you think of all the blue blood schools, you see they play in all the big cities in America, they are in charge of getting the flights, hotels and all food. The director of basketball operations makes all the plans off the court run smooth with help from the graduate assistant. The communicating process that starts off for the first time graduate of college trying to get into coaching starts during mid-January into April.

First time coaches start to communicate through email and in different situations text messages to start getting their name out there into the coaching world. Coaches during the season are focused on one thing only and it is their program and trying to make a tournament run through March. Hiring a future graduate assistant isn't top priority until a program loses in March but having emailed a coach helps future coaches get their name out there. When a future coach gets that long-dreaded phone call that they've been waiting for, the communication process picks up. After phone calls, coaches bring in future coaches to campus to do interviews with different people in the athletic department like the athletic director and other athletic department people.

Interviewing for an assistant coaching job has the same actions as hiring a graduate assistant or a director of basketball operations job. When head coaches are looking to hire a new assistant coach, the head coach has to find the right coach who fits his style of coaching and someone who can come into the program and help in any way possible on the court and off the court. When coaches are going after assistant coaching jobs, there are two different situations these coaches could be in. The first situation is when a coach already has an assistant coaching

job at another university and wants to move to a bigger school or wants to find another school that fits his style for his family. The second situation is when a coach gets fired from his previous University and needs a new job. The communication process is different between these two situations. In situation one, the coach has a job already and isn't in a rush to move University's because they are already in a situation making money and have a job. In situation two, the coach who got fired is not having any income coming in and the coach will communicate with anyone to try to find a new job.

The interview process to get a coaching job is different at different universities. Coaches can use different techniques by communicating questions that can stand out to athletic directors. One of these questions is: what do you expect me to accomplish in the first 90 days of getting the job? This question will help athletic directors think that you are trying to come into a program and make a difference in the first three months.

Another question is What are the top traits you are looking for in a head coach and the assistant coaches? When athletic directors are trying to find a new coach, they are looking for what coach's personality and experience that fits with the University, every head coach is the face of the program, and the personality and the coach's communication skills is how the fans and opponents fans react to the University. If the athletic director communicates about how he wants someone with your traits to have a coach, then you are in a great spot about getting the job.

One other question is: What gets the job done and how do I get the results done in this job? (Drucker 2004) Athletic director knows what happens around all of the athletic departments and will help the new coach by communicating with him and other people that will help in the department.

Another question is, what are the Universities highest parotitis goals this year and how can I as a coach help the university get there? Every University is trying to grow every year and there are many different ways Universities add on too. One example could be that they want attendance of the school to increase every year by a certain percent, another is to add to building and make classrooms a better environment for students.

Finally, one last question is: What are the biggest challenges facing the University? Schools have many different challenges and problems; some could be the rise of mental health problems with students, or the community doesn't support the University in any way. As a coach, they can use communication by talking with students or within the community to try to help in any way possible. Coaches play a big role on campus and having a coach that talks to other students other than his players can make the whole environment around the University better and more positive. Asking what you do in certain situations and lastly what are the limits to my authority and responsibility? This question is very important between the athletic director and head coach. Coaches have different situations throughout the year that might have to be handled outside the coaching staff. Having good communication with the athletic director might have coaches more freedom on how they want to handle a situation. Asking questions never hurts anyone, coaches ask questions on a daily basis. Asking athletic directors about responsibilities outside of basketball is a great help because certain athletic directors have certain activities that they need to do.

### **Communication with Parents**

As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, recruiting is an important part of coaching, getting players to your university is the key to winning championships. When offering and talking to high school or Junior College kids, parents are a key role in getting their kids to your

university. According to the Babe Ruth League (2019) a parent needs to be assured that their child's coach is both knowledgeable about the sport and cares for the child's well-being. Coaches have done many different ways to get kids to commit to their university, one of those ways is a home visit. Home visits are a great way for coaching staff to communicate with the family of the future student athlete. When talking in their homes, parents are communicating different questions that they have for the coaching staff. Coaches must be prepared to answer questions like, what happens if I get injured? What are the time requirements for the basketball program? What kind of academic help is available? How many other athletes are you recruiting at my son or daughters' position? What is your redshirt policy and how quickly will you get a commitment from my son or daughter? These questions are some of the many questions that parents might have for coaches. It's the job for the coaches to communicate and sell yourself and your program to make sure that their child is coming to the right University. According to NCSA (n.d.), each sport has certain times where coaches can go on recruiting trips and when parents and future student athletics can visit campus.

When coaches come into the homes of future players, coaches must understand that everyone comes from different backgrounds and people have different beliefs than another. Coaches must prepare and get information going into this situation to make sure that you are giving one hundred percent to that player. Communication is at an all-time high with talking with parents and players. Coaches need to sell themselves and help the future student-athlete to get them to the best spot and where the student-athlete can succeed after college as well. Coaches can also communicate about the process that happens on breaks and different trips that are taken throughout the year. Coaches use different foreign trips to look at student-athletes outside of America. Foo et al. (2021) state, this phenomenon is being led by the recruitment of international

student-athletes by higher education in the United States. Some programs have annual trips to different countries and play games against teams. Holidays are a great time for parents to see their sons or daughters, but if Universities go on trips, they can't see them. This gives the coach a chance to bring up the opportunity to travel the world and watch their children play. Coaches also communicate about how great their university's academic side is. Many universities have certain programs that are better than other Universities, coaches communicate with parents and players about what type of school major they want to pursue and the different programs that will be there for them. Coaches also communicate about different academic programs that help with school. Testing centers and homework centers are becoming popular all over the country and communicating with parents helps knowing that coaches care about their sons and daughters off the court as well. NCAA Division One Handbook (2023) states, bylaw 16.3.1.1 ordered NCAA member institutions to "make general academic counseling and tutoring services available to all student-athletes.

### **Communication With the Community**

Fan support is one of the biggest advantages within a basketball program and with the Universities. Coaches have the chance to help get support from the community with different events to talk to fans and different organizations. One of those ways coaches can communicate with the community is through sports talk shows that air at local restaurants. These local talk shows let coaches be able to communicate with people on the radio and give fans to hear the coach talk about what happened in the last game or just get the ability to hear and see a coach talk about his program in person. Another way coaches can give back to the community is to go to the local homeless shelters or go to different local Ronald McDonald house charities to give back.



Coaches can also have their players give back to the community by having their student-athletes go to local elementary schools and middle schools to get the chance to meet and communicate with the students. This is a great way for coaches to give back to the community and also is a chance for their student-athletes to get the chance to see that they are role models and how they communicate on and off the court means a lot. When players go to these schools you often see student-athletes play basketball or different sporting games in the gym or running out on the track and getting the chance to have the elementary kids show off their skills at a certain sport. Student-athletes also get the chance to read to the kids and get to interact in the classroom and show how important school is for young kids. When thinking about coaches in the community, this is a chance for coaches to get fans in the stands. When people see how the coach shows love to the local people, then see how he can communicate with them it is a program changer. Players can also benefit from seeing the community off the court as well.

According to Martin et al (2019),

Many institutions of higher education look to provide service opportunities for their students. As an extension of higher education, athletic departments have been tasked with producing socially responsible and civically engaged student-athletes (Brown et al., 2014; Harvery et al., 2007). While the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) does not mandate student-athlete community service participation, almost all university athletic departments encourage and often require their athletes to engage in service. (p. 1)

## **Social Media**

In this day in age, social media has become a huge tool and also a major problem for coaches.

Fenton et al. (2023) suggest,

Social media is embedded in our lives as a tool and a medium of communication and surveillance. Consequently, advancements in media and Internet technology have led to various censorship methods. However, despite the constant and ubiquitous nature of self and external censorship in society, many perceive censorship only as a tool of social control rather than as deeply embedded in self-expression. (p. 313)

As a coach, you have to monitor your team, staff, and yourself when using social media. Social media has become a tool that coaches can use to communicate and get information out to players and fans. Social media has helped coaches get information about players whom they would want to play for their program. Programs have now made different social media pages on websites like Instagram and Twitter to give future players a look into what happens on a day-to-day basis or get live updates during games (Bell, 2017).

As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, team rules are presented to the team and one of those rules deals with social media. As college coaches, you coach young adults who are from the age eighteen to twenty-three years old. Young adults tend to make mistakes when using social media and having do's and do not in the team rules is needed. Having those team rules are great but according to here are some of the positive information about social media Despite the potential for backlash and other major consequences, social media has become an important part of sports culture. It's a powerful tool for players to create a public image, and it serves several different important purposes. It can be very effective when used properly, and it has become almost compulsory, since athletes need to have their brand visible online in order to catch the attention of fans and sports officials-and to keep that attention.

Daren (2023) stated that social media will not be leaving anytime soon and while fans may want to see an unvarnished look at players' lives, that isn't really realistic. Social media

needs to be looked at as a professional platform. To players, social media should be viewed as their personal brand that allows them to network and build upon important relationships instead of a place to post every thought and feeling (Daren, 2023). Athletes must take into consideration that their posts are broadcasted for any audience to view, therefore they should utilize social media to demonstrate integrity (Daren, 2023) Social media is a great tool for helping the players brand in the new era of college basketball and the NIL era, there are many different situations you need to talk to your team about and if they post or say something online, there could be problems for yourself and the program. One of those situations that made using social media wrong was a high school football star who had offers from the top division one programs in the country. This player had his scholarship pulled because of a video post of him singing a rap song and saying a racial slur. This player was a highly rated football player out of high school and now doesn't have the opportunity to play sports at the division one level because of a social media post (Wittry, 2022).

Social media is now a space where in a matter of hours everyone in the world can know a story that is going on. As a coach, communication with family and their team needs to be spread around about doing the right thing. As a coach off the court, how you handle your life has to always be the right way. In the past two years there have been coaches who have gotten arrested and the day later their name was posted all over social media and have lost their jobs all in the same day. The same goes with the players, one bad post could terminate a scholarship and cause many different mental health problems.

According to Brougham (2021)

Research has shown that social media has an impact on mental health in both college students and college student-athletes. Evidence of this is linked directly with social

media's impact on sleep leading to effects on mental health and cybervictimization.

Student-athletes are known to run on limited sleep due to busy schedules, and their popularity within communities can make them a target of positive and negative media.

With previous research showing that there is a link between social media use and mental health, there are concerns about the mental health of student-athletes due to their status.

(p. 2)

### **Communicating Healthy Eating**

Coaches have many different jobs on their plates. Depending on what division of university a coach is at, Healthy eating and having a nutrition specialist is key to having success on the court. Many Universities have nutrition specialists to communicate with student-athletes to have a healthy diet to help their preformation on the court and off the court. For the high-division one-level student-athletes, they have access to chefs and different food sources for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Coaches can communicate with the nutrition specialist and the chef about what kinds of food each player needs.

Many players come into college with no nutrition experience on what helps your body and what hurts your body. Student-athletes come into college in all shapes and sizes, some players need to gain weight, or some players need to lose weight but maintain different muscles in their body. Coaches communicate with the player on different goals they want as a coach for the player and what kind of goals the player wants as well. At the lower division one and in the division two and three, the nutrition plans change depending on the school. Different schools at the lower levels can't afford a nutrition specialist or a chief to cook for the team, then this is on the head coach and all the assistant coaches to communicate with the student athletes to make sure they are eating bad food on a regular basis. This is another advantage of going to a higher

division one program because you will get all the proper food you need. “The choice of rational and healthy diet for athletes is determined by many factors, one of the most important being the motivation to consume health-friendly foods, considering the specifics of the chosen sport.

Other factors influencing diet and habits include national traditions, family members, friends, current trends, and popularity. The choice of a healthy diet for elite athletes also depends on the nature and duration of physical exercise, the amount of energy spent, the time required for recovery, and preferences of food” Coaches push student athletes to a point where your body burns calories at a rapid rate, nutrition and eating healthy is key to keep your body healthy. “According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 40-60% of human health depends on a lifestyle, 25-30% of which is devoted to a rational diet. Therefore, by meeting physiological needs, adhering to the principles of rational and proper nutrition, athletes can adapt to the experienced physical loads more quickly and achieve better sports performance” (Tang, 2016, p. 122.)

### **Communication Through lifting**

Coaches have all the ability to communicate with their players about how to improve a student athlete’s ability on the court and in the locker room but one important thing that basketball coaches can’t do is teach kids how to get stronger in the weight room. Strength coaches play an important role in how teams improve their conditioning and strength for the basketball court. Coaches communicate with their strength coaches and find different ways to make student athletes jump, run and lift more to bring success to their program.

According to Shi et al. (2022),

Basketball is a team sport that comprises high levels of powerful physical attributes such as jumping and sprinting. The ability to perform such actions requires optimal

combination of force and velocity, and therefore producing maximal power output which is a crucial determinant in basketball. Resistance training is broadly used to develop muscular strength and power. (p. 174)

Strength coaches communicate with high energy to get the best out of their players in the weight room. Like a basketball coach, strength coaches have to have a different mentality on how to communicate with players. Some student-athletes have more experience in the weight room, and some have zero experience in it. This is a great way players can communicate with their strength coach about how to lift properly and how the footwork is done. Strength coaches also have the ability to communicate with their players about different goals to get stronger and faster.

### **Communication process during Injuries**

One of the worst feelings that coaches, and student athletes have in sports is injuries. Injuries happen every year and these can hurt a team physically and mentally. When certain players go down with a certain injury, there are many different aspects that happen. First, the coach and the student athlete will communicate with the athletic trainer to see what the next steps are. An athletic trainer is the person within your program who is in charge of any kind of injury and also for the therapy after an injury. The role of the athletic trainer is long and tiring hours.

According to Singe et al. (2022),

The culture of college sport demands an individual's time and energy, and for the professional working in this setting, it can be draining and overwhelming. Since the early 2000's researchers have defined the sport workplace to be "greedy" and for success one must be willing to sacrifice their time (long hours, weekends, facetime) and have availability (24/7) (Bruening & Dixon, 2008; Dixon & Bruening, 2007; Taylor et al.,

2019, 2021). The characterization of the sports setting to be consuming continues to stand as concerns around work addiction and workaholism are reported as well among those who work in college athletics (Eason et al., 2020; Taylor et al., 2019, 2021). To be successful in the sport setting, the ideal worker is often seen as someone who can dedicate a large portion of their time and energy to their work role, which often leaves them depleted for roles outside of the work setting. (p. 586)

Coaches communicate with their athletic trainers on a daily basis, having a good communication process with your trainer will help know what is going on with their players. Student athletes will get hurt during the year and have to communicate where their pain is with the athletic trainer. Trainers will start a communication plan with the player and the coach on how they will treat this injury. If an injury requires surgery, the athletic trainer will communicate with the University doctors and plan a surgery time and will see how long the player will have to recover. According to Petit and Covassin (2021), “The AT’s (athletic trainer) and other healthcare professionals are expected to utilize current and successful research evidence when making clinical decisions to optimize patient care” (p. 10)

### **Sports Betting**

Sports betting is becoming one of the most popular things to do in the country. If you turn on your TV and are watching sports, you will see different commercials from Draft Kings, FanDuel or the Barstool Sports Book advertising sports betting. Sports betting has been around for a very long time legal and illegal, in May 2018 the US Supreme court changed the law giving the states the choice to make sports betting legal.

The only states in the United States of America where sports betting is illegal are Vermont, Minnesota, Missouri, Kentucky, Texas, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, Oklahoma,

Idaho, Utah, California, Alaska, and Hawaii. As a college basketball Coach and all student-athletes, sports betting is illegal according to the NCAA, "rule 10.02.1 Sports Wagering, defines sports gambling as "placing, accepting, or soliciting a wager (on a staff member's or student-athletes' own behalf or on the behalf of others) of any type with any individual or organization on any intercollegiate, amateur or professional team or contest." The rule includes a non-exclusive list of examples of such bets, including the use of a bookmaker, internet bets, fantasy league bets where an entry fee is required or parlay boards.

Rule 10.3 mandates that an institution's athletic department staff and nonathletic department staff members who have responsibilities within or over the athletic department "shall not knowingly participate in sports wagering activities. Rule 10.4 in turn serves notice that collegiate staff employees who are found to have violated that rule shall be subject to disciplinary or corrective action. NCAA rules also place responsibility for enforcement of the rules, and reporting violations of the rules, squarely on each school's president or chancellor. "It is the responsibility of each member institution to control its intercollegiate athletics program in compliance with the rules and regulations of the Association. The institution's president or chancellor is responsible for the administration of all aspects of the athletics program, including approval of the budget and audit of all expenditure" (Rule 2.1.1).

Each school is required to monitor the conduct of its athletic programs "and to identify and report to the Association instances in which compliance has not been achieved" (Rule 2.8.1). That rule also imposes a duty on each member to "fully cooperate" with the NCAA in this regard, and the school is responsible for compliance. (NCAA) With sports betting becoming popular, college coaches have to prepare and communicate with their players about not sports



betting, especially on their own games. There have been many different incidents with coaches and players betting on games and even their own games.

### **Coaching and Communicating During The Pandemic**

Coaching can be very difficult by dealing with all the media and all of the things that happen on social media. The pandemic of COVID-19 was a challenging time for everyone but for coaches it was something that nobody would have thought would happen, sports just stopped. When COVID-19 hit it was during the best time of the year for basketball, March Madness. March Madness is when college basketball teams start playing their conference tournament, then leads into the NCAA tournament. With more background on COVID, "On December 31st, 2019, China reported its first cases of the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19), and after that, events moved rapidly in a way that changed the lives of many college athletes. The United States reported its first case of COVID-19 on January 20th, 2020, and by March 11th, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 to be a global pandemic. Shortly after this announcement the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) and other sport organizations suspended all college sport competition for the spring of 2020. Since then, the U.S. has had a difficult time containing the virus and it appears that college athletes are likely to continue to face uncertainty in the 2021 academic sport seasons" (Scott, et., al 2021, p. 1). It is a difficult conversation talking to your student athletes about COVID-19 and forcing them to head home and be away from campus.

The communication process during COVID-19 was a difficult process. With student athletes being sent home and Universities being closed and having all the gyms being closed, players didn't have access to any of the resources that the University offered. Coaches started to communicate by phone call, email, and text messages until zoom calling became a thing. Zoom

became a popular type of communication app where people can communicate with many people on the screen. Zoom is like being able to facetime people and this was the key communication app for coaches. COVID-19 continued into 2020 but student athletes were able to return to campus to start classes and to be able to play basketball again.

During the 2020 season coaches had to increase communication throughout the program. With COVID-19 happening and running through college programs, coaches had to coach differently by being in contact more with athletic trainers and talking about the different protocols that the CDC and the NCAA had in place. Programs were forced to do testing 3-4 times a week and some conferences were forced to do COVID-19 testing daily to help return to play (Scott, 2020, p. 1) Another example of how the communication changed during the pandemic was the gyms being empty during basketball games. When certain teams play, home court advantage plays an important role in how student athletes play and how coaches communicate during the game. During the 2020 season, only athletic personnel from the University were allowed to attend the games meaning zero family and friends were allowed to see the games in person. With the gym having no fans, the only type of communication that was going on was between the players on the court, coaching staff and depending on what gym you are at the radio guys giving the play by play for fans. When coaches walk into certain gyms it is hard to hear and communicate with their guys, with having no fans in the stands this gave coaches freedom to be able to talk stuff out when players were on the court. Players also had more freedom to communicate with each other on the court. Many coaches made it a prime key to making sure you communicate and cheer on your teammates to give the feel that fans were in the stands.

As mentioned in previous paragraphs, mental health played a role in the pandemic with student-athletes. Collegiate athletes were not immune to the pandemic's effects on mental health. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) stated that mental health concerns among student-athletes were twice as high compared to the pre-pandemic rates (Johnson, 2021). Already before the pandemic, student-athletes reported high rates of anxiety and depression" (Schary &, Lundqvist, 2021, p. 304) Coaches and trainers will continue to play a role as role models for these kids during tough times. During this time, players weren't able to do certain things normal students were doing at this time. Coaches and Universities had different protocols about how things work outside the gym and classroom. Student athletes had many different situations that they could choose from, if they followed all of the Universities protocols then they would be able to play and continue to test negative for COVID-19. For student athletes not being able to do free stuff outside of the basketball gym can affect play on the court, coaches use different communication resources to help their players.

### **Rules and Regulations in Sports**

Before each year coaches communicate the NCAA rules and the regulations in sports. The NCAA has many different rules, and the rules are always changing. Coaches teach and communicate to their players the right way to play the game of basketball. Certain players are faster and stronger than other players, and some players get away with different rules throughout a game or during the season. Coaches can coach how to play the right way, but certain players do things on their own that can help their team win. "Rule modifications in basketball have been useful to modify the dynamics of the game over time (Pluta et al., 2014). These rule modifications, such as those implemented in training through small-sided games, cause adaptations on the part of the athletes and the appearance of new behaviors emerging from the

new limitations (Silva et al., 2014). Specifically, rule modifications are necessary for the development of the sport. In particular, new rules allow matching the game to the current players' demands, both physically and technically. For instance, the increase in the distance of the three-point line was implemented in order to stimulate development in players' skills and technique" (Ibanez S.J., et.al, 2018. p.2)

### **Communication Through Fundraising**

Many college coaches are blessed to have University that gives different resources to basketball programs to allow them to be great on and off the court. Many of the schools you see on ESPN and CBS have the backing of University funding to give and make the experience of the student-athletes a better advantage on the court.

According to Meagher (1995),

Before the season starts, coaches meet with people in the academic departments to see what their budget is and how much they can spend on travel, food, hotels, and other expenses that can help the teams in a positive way. Many schools don't have the fundraising that the power five schools do so coaches have to set up different fundraising opportunities to raise money for the program. "Fundraising has been and will continue to be, one of the vital means for many sports programs and facilities to generate much-needed dollars for operation. However, prospective fundraisers need to realize that the climate for fundraising in the 1990s has changed. More organizations will jump on the same discretionary dollars, and the donors will become more demanding. In order to cope with these difficulties, fundraisers will need to readjust their strategies. Fundraisers will need to understand all fundraising-related elements such as the event's purpose, target markets and donors, and methods and strategies to be employed. According to the author,

the key to successful fundraising in sports is summarized as the three "R"s: the Right person asking the right amount at the Right Time (p.225)

Coaches try different ways to raise money for their programs. One way is to have an annual golf tournament for fans and for the people in the community. This is a great way to get people involved in your program, coaches get the opportunity to see fans off the court and get the opportunity to communicate with fans and talk about other things than basketball. Another way coaches raise money for their programs is by working on different events in town. This gives student-athletes a chance to be a part of the community and show fans that they care about how people get to communicate with fans.

According to Lipsey (2021),

The Annual fundraising strategy common among Division I FBS athletic departments is the use of tiered reward systems. Despite the need to increase annual contribution revenue, published research or empirical analysis examining tiered reward systems is non-existent. Rather, most of the fundraising literature is replete with knowledge pertaining to donor behavior, donor retention, and donor motivations. Past publications in the sport industry have also researched the value of season tickets, corporate sponsor naming rights, and sponsorship apparel deals (Jensen et al., 2016), but not tiered reward systems (p.239).

### **Conclusion**

Communication is important in any profession, one profession that needs maximum communication is college coaching. There are many ways coaches communicate with their team, staff and administration. The goal of this paper is to teach people the understanding of how important communication is through coaching. One thing that I have learned from a young age

being around coaching is that better teams have coaches who communicate with their team and are more successful every year. Communication plays a key role in coaching college basketball; many great coaches have different types of communication styles that help guide their team to win at the collegiate level. As a basketball coach, communication goes a long way to how successful a coach will be during their career, having great communication with their staff, players and athletic department will only help coaches. Communication is important in any job, when you think of basketball, you think of players communicating on the court between teammates, coaches communicating with players and other coaches, and fans also communicating the entire game communicating with each other and cheering or yelling. The game of basketball would change if communication was not involved. Communication happens every day, the great coaches use communication as a model to get their message across to get their program to win championships. Without successful communication, coaches will not be effective in coaching at the college level.

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